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© Chuck Graham

ON THE COVER

Photographer Scott Serfas thrives on getting in on the action, as illustrated by our incredible cover shot of pro snowboarder Mikkel Bang. While in the backcountry of Whistler, British Columbia, Serfas drove around looking for the perfect angle so he could frame a diagonal line. And with Bang's help, he captured the perfect shot with a Canon EOS-1D Mark III. To view more of Serfas's thrilling action shots, be sure to read our profile on page 68.

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EDITOR'S NOTES

EXTREME STEPS

"Yosemite Valley, to me, is always a sunrise, a glitter of green and golden wonder in a vast edifice of stone and space."—Ansel Adams

I DON'T THINK ANSEL ADAMS had a photograph like the harrowing *Full Frame* shot on page 14 in mind when he offered the above quote about Yosemite Valley. The heart-stopping image (feel free to flip ahead and come back) was shot by Jimmy Chin and features celebrated American climber Dean Potter crossing the top of Yosemite Falls on a single wire.

Yes, you can see the beauty of Yosemite in Chin's photo and there are hints of the "glitter of green and golden wonder" that Adams describes along with the imposing "vast edifice of stone and space." But Chin's image does something that separates it from traditional outdoor photography and crosses over to *extreme* outdoor photography, which is the theme of this issue. Along with capturing the vast beauty of nature, the photo shows how small our place in it really is.

Admittedly, extreme outdoor photography is a genre title I might have made up myself while connecting several similar photographers for this same issue last year. And though Chin's photo may be an extreme example—sorry, had to go there—of this new genre, it has similarities to other images we feature in this issue. Take Scott Serfas, whose artful snowboarding shot graces our cover. The most impactful thing about the image, to me, is the diagonal slant of the mountain on the left side of the shot and the snowboarder's wing-like, outstretched arms. According to our interview with Serfas, the snowboarder was only able to leap that far because he carried too much speed into the jump. And then to stop his rotation, he had to open his arms to keep him from spinning into orbit. Now that's an extreme move!

Capturing great photos in extreme conditions doesn't come easy. On page 78, we interview Lucas Gilman who walks us through the technology and techniques required to shoot powerful images of surfers, kayakers, runners, and climbers in a range of difficult situations. "It's vital to know what the weather will be," Gilman tells interviewer Barry Tanenbaum, "so we can take advantage of what are often very small windows of light. We all carry smart devices and use everything from the Weather Underground app to area-specific local websites. We check forecasts, storm tracks, radar patterns, everything."

In a similar vein, on page 62, outdoor photographer Josh Miller breaks down his "7 Essentials for Extreme Outdoor Photography," including everything from Pelican cases to headlamps and hand warmers. We also offer you some travel photography tips from two extremely different locations in this issue. On page 82, Chuck Graham gives his advice on how to photograph nature in the Falkland Islands, which, if you live in the United States, is about as remote a place as you can find. A little closer to home, our publisher Ron Leach offers his tips on how to photograph New Orleans during Mardi Gras as part of our new *Destination Travel* feature. Ron's a New Orleans's local, so he should know better than anyone how to capture his city during the wildest party on earth. All of which proves that you don't have to look too far to find something extreme to photograph.

Dan Havlik

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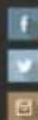
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died in 2015 in a
wingsuit flying
accident in Yosemite
National Park.

© Jimmy Chin



© Peter Gassner

TRIPLE HEADER

Peter Gassner shot this incredible image of a lightning strike with a double rainbow (and a dose of thunder) during an afternoon monsoon storm in his backyard in Sedona, Arizona.

EXTREME OUTDOOR PHOTOGRAPHY

WE LOVE OUTDOOR PHOTOGRAPHY but we like it even better when there's some element of the "extreme" involved. Yes, extreme is tough to define but for this assignment we were looking for images of dizzying mountaintops shot from harrowing angles, exploding volcanoes, dangling ice climbers, kayakers barreling through rapids, or stunning displays of weather. We didn't get all of those things but we did get some amazing images from *Shutterbug* readers. Check out our favorite 10 outdoor images that made us see the awesomeness and danger of nature in the extreme.



© Andy Lerner



© Jerry Benner

STAIRWAY TO THE UNKNOWN

Jerry Benner captured this photo with a Nikon D40X that had been specially altered to capture infrared images. He shot it with an AF-S Nikkor 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6G ED II lens at f/9, 1/100 second at 18mm.

DINNER

Andy Lerner captured this intense photo of a lioness having a meal after helping to take down a buffalo with a Nikon D4 and a 400mm f/2.8 lens at f/16, 1/200 second, ISO 320. He also used a Gitzo monopod with a Jobu gimbal head.

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DARK NIGHT SKY

"The clear dark night sky out in Death Valley, California, is very special," Mark Lohde writes. "Bearing the 115-degree heat during the day and enjoying the 65 degrees at night is part of the fun of the desert, just to get the shot."



© Douglas Croft

INTIMIDATION

Douglas Croft captured this fierce shot of an elephant with a Nikon D7200 and a Nikkor 80-400mm lens at ISO 800, f/5.6, 1/2000 second. "He'd just come crashing through the river, ears flared, trumpeting and shaking his head," Croft says about the photo. "Now he was on the sand and still charging toward us. What ultimately turned out to be a bluff, was a bit unnerving at the outset."



© Jock Goodman

GIANT WAVE DEFIANCE

"A few years ago, a giant WNW swell rolled into Kona, Hawaii, and residents and visitors flocked to the shore to witness the power," Jock Goodman explains about this image. "While this may look foolish, the subject is actually several feet above the ocean level and most of the wave energy is spent crashing into the lava shelf and directed upward. To me his stance shows his defiance and confidence." He shot it hand-held with a Nikon D200 at 50mm, f/10, 1/1000 second.

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NORTHERN LIGHTS OVER THE MIGHTY MAC
Morgan Somers captured this transcendent image of the Aurora Borealis over the Mackinac Bridge in Michigan with a Nikon D600, a Sigma lens, and Vu filters.



© Patrick Emerson

STORM UNWINDS
"A passing thunderstorm slides by my town," Patrick Emerson says about this shot. "The storm is coiled like a stack of records." He captured it with a Canon EOS 6D digital SLR and a 16-35mm f/4 lens at 16mm.



© Gerry Groeber

SUPERSTITION STORM
"The Superstition Mountains in Arizona are an ominous site, add a monsoon storm and they are to be feared," Gerry Groeber writes about this dangerously beautiful shot.

© Theresa Rose Ditson



TROUBLE
Theresa Rose Ditson shot this striking image during a wild nighttime storm at Watson Lake in Prescott, Arizona. "The lightning was occurring in multiple directions and created an almost strobe-light effect," Ditson says. "This, despite its own brightness, actually made it harder for me to see anything to focus or compose this shot, as my eyes did not have the chance to accommodate to either extreme of light or darkness. Needless to say, I had to 'bolt' myself out of there shortly after this shot!" She captured it with a Nikon D810 and a Nikkor 14-24mm lens at 19mm, f/7.1. It's a 20-second exposure at ISO 100.

PICTURE THIS!—OUR NEXT ASSIGNMENT

TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHY

Travel photography is a very popular subject for *Shutterbug* readers, so expect this assignment to be highly competitive. What makes a great travel photo? Many things, of course, but we've found that the best images always tell some sort of story. Don't simply post a pretty picture. Beautiful photos are all well and good but they're a dime a dozen these days. To set your travel photos apart, include some interesting elements in the frame that give a sense of place or context. We want to imagine we're standing right there beside you, whether you're taking a photo on a dusty street in Marrakesh, or turning your camera toward a vast plain in Montana.



© Dan Havlik

SAN JUAN STREET SCENE
I was photographing a model in Old San Juan, Puerto Rico, when I came across this painter having a chat on his cell phone. As this gorgeous girl struck pose after pose in front of the painter and the colorful buildings behind, the painter didn't look up once, creating a fun juxtaposition on what was, otherwise, a straightforward travel shoot. I captured the image in 2007 with an Olympus E-3 DSLR and a Zuiko 12-60mm f/2.8 lens at f/8, 29mm, f/8, ISO 100, 1/320 second.

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OUR NEXT TOPIC: Fine Art Photography

DEADLINE: March 1, 2016 **PUBLICATION DATE:** June 2016

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TIME TRAVELS

TO SET HER IMAGE APART, DEBORAH SANDIDGE CHOSE MULTIPLE EXPOSURES FOR MAXIMUM IMPACT

By Barry Tanenbaum

THE SCENE IS OFTEN just the starting point of a Deborah Sandidge photograph. “It’s visualization,” she says. “I’m looking at a scene and imagining what’s going to happen over time.” What was going to happen at the San Antonio, Texas, River Walk was the continuing passage of the water taxis. Sandidge knew they were the key to an expressive, dramatic photograph, one that would get as close as possible to picturing the passage of time.

She also knew it was going to take more than one exposure to make that photo. Standing on a bridge over the river, her camera on a tripod and tripped with a cable release, she made test exposures, finding that four seconds captured “more of a suggestion of the boat, rather than the boat itself or just a blur of color.”

Sandidge took three exposures as taxis traveled on the river and later used Photoshop’s layer masks to combine them.

“The camera was taking almost the exact same photograph in each exposure,” Sandidge says. “The only thing different was the motion of the boats on the river, and in Photoshop I was basically controlling what shows through and what doesn’t.”

She also used the program’s Lighten blend mode to control the different transparencies of the light.

“When I look at a scene or an area,”

Sandidge says, “I’m always checking the weather, the clouds, the wind direction, and the light. And I’m thinking, What tools and techniques can I use to set my image apart from everybody else’s? Because we all have the same opportunities, and we’re all looking at essentially the same scenes.” ■

Visit Deborah Sandidge’s website, deborahsandidge.com, to view a variety of images, learn about her workshops, and check out tips and techniques at her blog.

Tech Talk: Deborah Sandidge took the photographs that comprise this image with a Nikon D810 and an AF-S Nikkor 24-120mm f/4G ED VR. The settings were four seconds, f/14, ISO 100, manual exposure, and Matrix metering.

© Deborah Sandidge

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DAYS AT THE RACES

HOW TO TELL A DIFFERENT STORY WITH YOUR PHOTOGRAPHY *By Blaine Harrington*

With my camera mounted on the starting gate I was ready to trip the shutter with my SMDV RFN-4s wireless remote transmitter/receiver set. But as soon as the last horse was hustled into the gate, they were off; there was no warning bell or horn. On my first attempt they were 10 paces gone before I hit the button. I learned quickly, though, and was ready for this start.

I TRAVEL TO TAKE PICTURES, but sometimes I just happen to be in an interesting area, like last spring in Lexington, Kentucky. Let's see: Lexington, horse country, the Keeneland racetrack nearby, and me never without my camera gear. Photography was bound to happen.

Long ago I'd shot motorcycle racing. How different could a horse race be? Actually, a lot different. The bikes go over a course again and again for an hour or two, maybe more, so there were lots of opportunities for cool shots as I moved from position to position. But once I choose a spot at a horse race, I'll be there for the duration. The horses would be there once, briefly, and I'd have a couple of seconds to get the shot.

So I had to decide: starting gate, finish line, or someplace between? Fortunately, at the Keeneland track they have races every half hour on two tracks—one turf, one dirt—so I'd be able to change position for each race.

I also had a few other advantages. I'd made some contacts in and around Lexington, including a connection with the convention and visitors bureau that got me a press pass. And I had the help of some of the track photographers who let me shoot with them or pointed out positions. And they had ladders and a long camera pole. I could also access the grandstand roof.

I appreciated the comfort of relying on my familiar kit of three Nikon DSLRs (D2X, D300, D810, almost always in continuous high-speed advance mode) and five Nikkor lenses (the 14-24mm, 24-70mm, 70-200mm and 200-400mm zooms, and the 16mm fisheye).

There were special rules and etiquette for photography at the track. You couldn't shoot from under the railings, and you couldn't use flash. Pretty much anything that could spook the horses was prohibited, so I kept my eyes on what the track photographers did and didn't do just in case I might be tempted to try something that was out of bounds.

I shot probably 20 races over three days, and that was not enough time to really get into the groove and then refine the groove. Things happened fast, and my photography was more instinctive and reactive than anticipated. For instance, I always think about where the light is going to be, but at the track my thinking wasn't as methodical, even analytical, as I'm used to. I don't think I missed much,



Symmetry at the stables at Keeneland, just before the morning workout.

but I'd have liked to have had more time to experience the experience.

I learned the usual considerations applied, but at a faster pace. Early morning and late afternoon light were to be explored and exploited to the fullest. Late afternoon races provided interesting shadows if I was in the right position. The

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I took this from the top of the grandstand at the Keeneland racetrack with my 200-400mm lens. I opened up the shadows a bit in postproduction to get some separation among the horses.



Thoroughbred horses at Calumet Farm, Lexington. The separated fencing keeps the horses from coming up to each other.

Mares and foals at WinStar thoroughbred horse farm, near Lexington. I took this from the top of the stables to get the pattern. I shot horse farm images in the mornings, before the noon-start races at Keeneland.

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It's a shot you always see, and one you always want to get: the scene setter. This is CH Gypsy Supreme, a nine-time champion, at the Kentucky Horse Park in Lexington.

track shooters appreciated overcast days for good reason: the harsh light of a bright, sunny day will show up somewhere along the track as the horses run; sometimes I'd pick a position where bad light had an easy time finding me.

There was something to be said for the challenge of the relatively new and unknown, and I was able to bring elements of my travel photography to the track, like approaching the shoot with the idea of taking not individual images, but of creating a story, a photo essay about an event and its location. I didn't shoot only racing shots; there were things happening



Before "They're off!" there's the bugler calling the race. I photographed him at several races and particularly like this image for its blue sky and strong graphic line. The bit of track reflection in the bugle isn't bad either.

in the stables, in the paddocks, at the edges of the track, in the surrounding countryside. There was atmosphere to be captured or created.

And that was a key concept to latch onto: no matter what I was faced with,

there were images to be created and a story to be told. ■

A selection of Blaine Harrington's images can be viewed at his website, blaineharrington.com.

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"This is what you'll see mid-morning along the High Line," Timothy Schenck says. "What caught my eye was the unexpected ribbon cutting a nice curve through what is normally a rectangular-gridded city."

door. It was the blue hour, the house was lit up, and I took a step back from the camera and tripod and shot the setup with the iPhone. I sent the iPhone photo right then to the architecture team, which wasn't on the shoot, so they could get excited about what we were doing and how great it looked. Sometimes I'll do that with the playback photo on the LCD, or I'll put the camera on Live View. People can get a sense of the scene and what the shot is going to look like. I'm giving them a teaser without sending the actual image. It gives them a sense of anticipation."

And then there's keeping up with the industry. "I'm posting to Instagram and Flickr, but mostly Instagram because it lends itself to phone photos. I was shooting the construction of the Whitney Museum from the top of a building, and the skyline was amazing. I shot that and posted it, and it establishes a presence for me, gives people a sense of, Oh, look what he's working on."

He isn't on a hunt for followers. "What I'm looking for is to connect with like-minded individuals in the industry I work in, other artists I respect, publishers, and architects. I've chosen to follow those people; then a lot of them see what I'm doing and follow me. It's a laid-back way to market without hard selling, a way of sharing what you're up to in a casual way."

STREET SMARTS

HOW A SAVVY SHOOTER USES SOCIAL MEDIA TO PROMOTE HIS WORK *By Barry Tanenbaum*

NOT LONG AGO I caught up with Timothy Schenck, a New York-based professional photographer who specializes in the architectural stories of projects he considers will someday have historical and lasting cultural significance.

Along with media about his inclusion in a couple of Whitney Museum of American Art projects and his ongoing documentation of the city's High Line park, was a promo for *Getting the Shot*, a one-day workshop he was conducting for the Municipal Art Society of New York. "Grab your iPhone, your SLR, your point-and-shoot..." the copy said.

I thought, Tim teaching iPhone photography? This required investigation.

"I find the phone very useful as a visual notebook for things happening at the speed of the city; things I might want to revisit," Schenck says. "It's a scouting tool when I don't have the DSLR. I'll take some

pre-shots of what I want to get with the big camera."

He also uses the phone for behind-the-scenes shots. "A few weeks ago I was shooting a house for an architect. I set up my camera for a shot of a trellis the architect had designed, leading to the front



"On this day my assignment was the opening of a new section of the High Line park, and I was going rooftop to rooftop photographing a procession moving north. I like the light and the way the little window looked like a framed picture of the city. And the water tank gives the photo that old-time New York City vibe."

Photos © Timothy Schenck

DISCOVERED ONLINE

There's a good reason for Schenck's belief in the importance of sharing images. His career story is a right-place, right-time tale, with the right place being social media. The right time was some years ago when a camera company was searching the web for talented enthusiasts to use a new camera they were going to market to talented enthusiasts. Many suitable candidates were found; Schenck, a structural engineer, was one of four ultimately selected for the

company's advertising campaign.

"I had a whole other life path mapped out when that happened," he says. "Photography was becoming a hobby for me at that time, but the camera company gig put things on a rocket." He began to take the hobby more seriously, and before long it became his career.

STICK WITH THE BASICS

So what did he tell the *Getting the Shot* participants who arrived at the workshop with iPhones?

"The first thing was to know the

limitations of what they're working with," Schenck says, "and to work within those borders. My take is that the iPhone camera is great in bright, sunny conditions, not so great when things start to get dark. Also shooting into direct light can be tricky, so know what to avoid."

Good things to do included turning on the camera's grid to keep lines lined up and to help with the rule of thirds. "It's a pretty basic camera until the apps come into play, so I told them to keep the tips and techniques to the basics. Then I gave them some real-world things to think about,



The Flatiron Building on Fifth Avenue. "I have a thing for white-sky photos. I like the lack of reference, of kind of making a specimen out of the subject by framing it to take away the subtext and surroundings. This is the kind of photo I take, then I have to get on the train for an hour, so I work right on the phone, playing with contrast and levels to increase the effect."



"This is not a Citi Bike, it's a Dali bike, and it's probably my most-liked Instagram photo. I was shooting a piece of installed artwork, off to the left, when I saw the bike, just locked up there and looking like it melted. Maybe it's an art installation."

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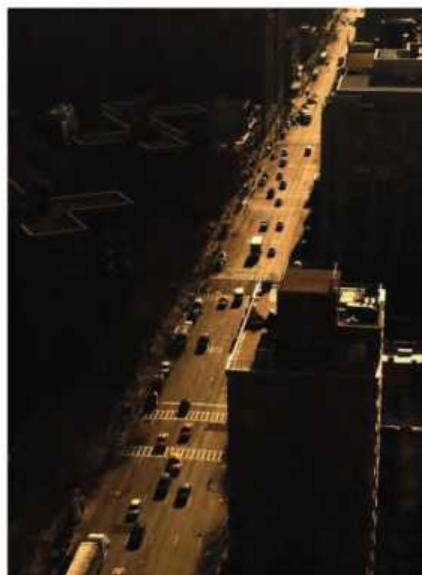
Taken from the top of the Standard Hotel in the Meatpacking District, looking toward the Empire State Building. "It's that classic 'New York City from a rooftop' photo."

like take the time to step out of whatever hurry you're in, whatever your career or your problems might be, and just be a photographer, an artist, for the time you're taking pictures. Have the mindfulness of a photographer, and think only of getting that one shot; that'll help you immensely. The photo isn't something you pass by and grab; it's something you really concentrate on and take care with."

He also told them to take pictures from other than their initial positions. "Move around, try to find higher or lower perspectives. I like to find perspectives that leave people asking, 'How did you get that shot? Where did you shoot from?'"

"I took the participants to Grand Central and suggested they go up on the Apple Store balcony and shoot straight down to get patterns of light and shadow cast by the sun and people passing by. I told them to look for different angles, different kinds of shots, so they could say, 'I really put a lot of myself into these shots; not only what I saw, but what I thought of.'"

For Schenck, the iPhone also lends itself to different kinds of shots than those he might take with his DSLR. "It's a different camera," he says, "but with it I can stretch



"Light, shadow, and a line of traffic on Tenth Avenue. Low sun on a winter afternoon, maybe three o'clock. I saw the scene and thought of those vintage New York City photos that have this look."

my creative muscles without having to carry another camera, and I can instantly get the results out there into the world."

Because as Timothy Schenck learned, you never know who's out there looking. ■



The new World Trade Center concourse, under the West Side Highway. Schenck spent an hour or two in the area on a scouting trip for pictures, moving from vantage point to vantage point to see how people fit within the space. "I've got the best of the photos saved on the phone to guide DSLR images."

Check out Timothy Schenck's images and activities at his website, timothyschenck.com. His iPhone Instagram posts are at [instagram.com/timothyschenck](https://www.instagram.com/timothyschenck).

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By Scott Kelby

Q I've heard you say that you frequently use a 70-200mm f/2.8 lens (usually at the 200mm length) for shooting portraits. But I also read that you recommend and like the 85mm f/1.2 (or f/1.4 or f/1.8) for portraits as well. So, what is your criteria for deciding when to use each lens for portraits?

A I only use the 85mm for outdoor portraits, where I'll be able to take advantage of a super shallow depth of field at f/stops like f/1.4 or f/1.8. That's a lot harder to do in a studio situation where you're more likely to be around f/11 (because even when you lower the power of your strobes all the way down, it's still too much light to shoot at f/1.4 without adding a neutral density filter over your lens and stuff like that). So, that's pretty much my criteria. I do use the 70-200mm f/2.8 outdoors a lot as well, and in those cases I only shoot it at f/2.8. However, the 85mm really doesn't come indoors very often (maybe at a wedding when I can shoot in natural light, but outside of that, it's an outdoor lens for me). Hope that helps.

Q I'm struggling to get sharp portraits with my 85mm f/1.4 lens. Only every fourth or fifth shot is in sharp focus. I hear so many photographers raving about this lens, but I have so many out-of-focus shots that I'm ready to return it. Is there a setting I need to change in the camera that will help?

A Here's the good news: your lens probably isn't messed up (so don't return it), and there isn't some secret camera setting you need to fix the problem. What will help is using a different focusing technique when you're using these super-fast (low numbered f/stop) lenses that will get nearly all your shots in focus. It's kind of the opposite to what we do when we're using our regular lenses. Normally, we'd place the focus dot (or rectangle) over our subject's eye (well, the eye that's closest to the camera), press the shutter button down halfway to lock focus, then we recompose the shot the way we want it, and press the shutter button when our subject

"My biggest struggle shooting hockey is white balance—the ice should be white, and if your white balance is 100 percent on, you'll get either bluish ice or yellowish ice, and neither one looks right."

gives us the expression we're looking for, right? Right. That's what we normally do, except that doesn't work with these super-fast lenses with a crazy shallow depth of field at f/stops like f/1.2, f/1.4, and even f/1.8. Instead you need to: (a) compose the shot first, (b) use the joystick or toggle on the back of your camera to move that focus dot (or rectangle) over your subject's eye manually, and when your subject gives you the expression you're looking for, then you take the shot. No "lock focus first then recompose." Instead it's "compose first, then move the focus point, then take the shot." Also, it helps to keep the camera on somewhat of an even plane (or axis) just straight up and down, or straight left and right, but that's after you've changed how you focus and compose for these super-fast lenses.

Q I'm new to sports photography and want to do a better job shooting my son's team during this hockey season. Your article in the November issue on tips for shooting sports photography was very informative and offered a clear explanation on the relationship between ISO, aperture, and shutter speed. Do you have any recommendations for a setup that is specific to hockey arenas and action shots in low-light conditions?

A I use the same settings for shooting NHL Hockey: I shoot wide open at the lowest-numbered aperture I can, either f/2.8 or f/4 depending on the lens I'm using, with one exception—I set my ISO to "Auto ISO" and then set my minimum shutter speed allowable to 1/1000 of a second. That way, no matter where they are on the ice, I won't get a blurry shot. I might get a bit of a noisier shot, but if you give me the choice between a shot that's a little noisy or a little blurry, I'll take noisy every time. My biggest struggle shooting hockey is white balance—the ice should be white, and if your white balance is 100 percent on, you'll get either bluish ice

or yellowish ice, and neither one looks right. I do see some guys out there using a gray card and setting it that way, but I just get as close as I can in camera. I use Live View mode to set my white balance because you can change white balance while the image is live on the back of your camera. When you find the one where the ice looks white, stick with that one and then exit out of Live View mode. If you still have tint problems on the ice, you'll have to fix it in post.

Q While I don't have a problem with my prints coming out too dark, I have an issue with them having a color cast, which is usually green. They look OK on the screen but they are not printing correctly. I have an Epson XP-800 printer. Does this mean I need to buy something to calibrate my screen and if so, what is a good option for someone on a budget?

A Without using some kind of a hardware calibration device, it's going to be tough to get a dead-on match with your printer and monitor, so you'll need to start with a hardware calibrator. I use the Spyder 5 hardware calibrator. It's not too expensive, and beats the heck out of making prints that make you mad. Start with it. (By the way, today the process of calibrating your monitor is automated—just hang the measuring device over on your monitor; run the software, and it does the rest.) Once your monitor is calibrated, then you'll need to go to the website of the company that makes the brand of paper you're printing on. For example, if you're printing on Canon paper, you need to go download the free Canon color profile for the exact paper you're printing on, and for the exact printer you'll be printing to. Then, when you're printing (I'm assuming out of Photoshop or Lightroom), you'll need to choose that printer. That'll get you really close. There is a little more to it than this (not a whole lot thankfully), but it's beyond the scope of this Q&A column. ■

Scott Kelby is a photographer, Photoshop Guy, award-winning author of more than 50 books, and CEO of KelbyOne, an online education community dedicated to helping photographers take the kinds of images they've always dreamed of. You can learn more about Scott at his daily blog (scottkelby.com), or follow him on twitter: [@scottkelby](https://twitter.com/scottkelby).

Editor's Note: Ask a Pro is a new Q&A column from professional photographer, writer, and educator Scott Kelby. Scott is here to answer all your photography-related questions, so if you have something you'd like to know, e-mail him at editorial@shutterbug.com (with "For Scott Kelby" as the subject line) and your query could be featured in the next edition of Ask a Pro.



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and increases the number of nozzles to 18,432 for each of the 12 channels. If any of the nozzles gets clogged or can't fire for any reason, a backup nozzle automatically goes into action to prevent output errors. The PRO-1000 printer has 11 new Lucia Pro pigment inks plus a Chroma Optimizer and features a Canon-rated print speed of six minutes for a bordered 17x22-inch print and just over four minutes when printing in high-speed mode. Most importantly, the PRO-1000 outputs beautiful photo prints with vivid colors and rich black and whites, along with expanded dynamic range.



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and the "world's first" variable low-pass filter that can be set to "off," "standard," or "high" based on the photographer's preference, along with low-pass filter bracketing. The new Sony RX1R II can shoot images as uncompressed 14-bit Raws along with other compressed image formats. On the video side, it captures Full HD in a range of frame rates and offers wireless transfer via built-in Wi-Fi and NFC. The fully loaded Sony RX1R II is not cheap but it offers more in one palm-sized shooter than several other cameras combined.



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➤ EASY WIDER

Analog photography fans have a new way to go wide, instantly. The Lomo'Instant Wide from Lomography uses Fuji Instax Wide film to produce arty wide-angle instant photo prints with an exposure area of 64x99mm. The design of the Lomo'Instant Wide, like many Lomography products, is pure retro chic and comes in

several different editions with different color schemes, including a two-toned Central Park version, a three-toned Portobello Road version, along with Black and White models. The camera has a 90mm (35mm equivalent) lens, a built-in flash, and comes with four colored gel filters.



➤ ART PART

Sigma has produced some innovative lenses in its Art line but the company's really outdone itself with the Sigma 20mm F1.4 DG HSM Art lens, which is the "world's first" 20mm f/1.4 lens for full-frame digital SLRs. The Sigma 20mm F1.4 DG HSM Art lens uses both "F" Low Dispersion (FLD) glass and five Special Low Dispersion (SLD) glass elements in an optical array of 15 elements in 11 groups. This setup is designed to minimize spherical aberration, axial chromatic aberration, and field curvature, to produce high image quality. Sigma sought to minimize flare and ghosting by establishing an optical design that is resistant to strong incidental light sources such as backlight with its Super Multi-Layer Coating. The Sigma 20mm F1.4 DG HSM Art lens is designed for seascape, cityscape, and astrophotography, as well as for photos in low light, indoor photography, environmental portrait photography, and event and wedding photography.

Sigma 20mm F1.4 DG HSM Art lens
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While it looks a bit like a large smartphone, the L16 has a subtle handgrip and a large shutter button on top next to a smaller power button. There's also a small flash on the front of the camera.

The L16 is dotted with tiny lenses with focal lengths of 35mm, 70mm, and 150mm. To squeeze all this into a device that can fit into a pants pocket, the L16 uses molded plastic lenses equipped with tiny directional mirrors.

Sixteen smartphone-sized 13-megapixel cameras are arranged in an asymmetrical pattern on front of the L16. Ten of the cameras fire simultaneously and the shots are fused together via the device's internal computer to create a single image at up to 52MP of resolution.



The L16 takes a few seconds to merge the multiple images together into a high-resolution photo but the user can see a quick snapshot of the image on the device's screen. You can edit the images on the device and then share them to popular social networks using the L16's built-in Wi-Fi. Photos can be captured in a variety of formats, including a Raw format.

The camera can shoot HD or 4K video but uses only one of the imaging modules for video capture. It can also shoot six frame still image bursts at 1/40th second per shot. Images and video are stored to 128GB of internal memory. It runs a version of the Android mobile operating system and is powered by a Snapdragon processor.

The L16 features a five-inch, high-definition touchscreen display on back. The camera's 16 lenses combine to create a focal range of 35-150mm and zooming is done by pinch zooming on the rear display or by sliding your finger vertically on the screen.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Product of the Month* is a new feature in *Shutterbug* where we showcase our favorite new imaging gear. If you have a product you'd like to be considered for *Product of the Month*, e-mail images and info to editorial@shutterbug.com.



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WORN PLANKS
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WHITEWASH
#P-PA5318WHW



GRAY PINE
#P-PA5318GRP



PALE WASHED WOOD
#P-PA5318PWW



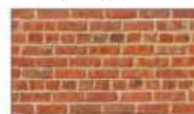
VINTAGE FLORAL
#P-PA5318VFL



WEATHERED BRICK
#P-PA5318WBR



WHITE BRICK
#P-PA5318WTB



RED BRICK
#P-PA5318RBR



GRUNGE BRICK
#P-PA5318GBR



FLOATING HEARTS
#P-PA5318FLH



ROSY POLKA DOTS
#P-PA5318RPO



AQUA POLKA DOTS
#P-PA5318APO



RAINBOW SPRINKLE
#P-PA5318RSP



PARTY BANNERS
#P-PA5318PBA



RED & WHITE CHEVRON
#P-PA5318RWC



GRAY & WHITE CHEVRON
#P-PA5318GWC



DEEP BLUE HAZE
#P-PA5318BH2



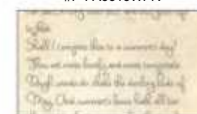
WINTER FROST
#P-PA5318WFR



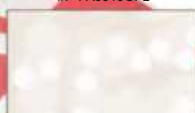
GRAY FLORAL
#P-PA5318GFL



CONGRATULATIONS
#P-PA5318CON



ROMANTIC SCRIPT
#P-PA5318ROS



IVORY GLOW
#P-PA5318IVG



CELEBRATION LIGHTS
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ACCESSORIZE THIS!

MY FAVORITE ACCESSORIES FOR OUTDOOR PHOTOGRAPHY

By Joe Farace

I THINK MY URGE to customize cameras comes from a love of cars. I can't seem to leave my cars alone and each one has touches that make it unique. I think that's why everybody gets really personal when it comes to finding, using, and often treasuring photographic accessories, gadgets, and gizmos. It helps if the source is obscure, foreign, and off the beaten track, which only adds to the exclusivity. And why not? The whole idea is to seek out photo accessories that accomplish something camera and lens manufacturers didn't think to make but perfectly fills a niche in your own photographic pursuits.

Here are my favorite accessories for outdoor photo shoots.

DRESSING FOR OUTDOOR SUCCESS

Cotton Carrier's Endeavor belt (\$89) supports your camera, ensuring access though a quick-release mechanism. It includes a shoulder strap with safety tether and a small pouch for storing your wallet, phone, keys, or a spare lens. The camera support system is made of polypropylene fitted with a Lexan camera receptacle that holds full-size SLRs as well as smaller mirrorless systems. The Small belt fits up to a 44-inch waist (first time I've worn a Small) while the Large belt fits up to a 61-inch waist.



Cotton Carrier's StrapShot (\$79) is a smaller version of the Endeavor and is compatible with a backpack, sling-style pack, or even your belt, although the company recommends you only do that with smaller cameras. StrapShot includes an EV1 (camera) connector, mounting strap, safety tether, and hand strap.

Who's It For: Hikers and outdoor photographers who like to travel light.

Why I Like It: Cotton Carrier produces well-made gear for outdoor shooters as well as outdoor enthusiasts—motorcyclists, bikers, ATV'ers—who like to make photographs.

Camera straps straddle a fine line between fashion and function. For my mirrorless cameras, I like the high style and comfortable straps from Artisan & Artist but I know many of my nature and landscape photographer buddies love BlackRapid's straps. Their Backpack Strap (\$34) converts your backpack into a sling strap. The Backpack Strap attaches to any compatible backpack that features either shoulder pad D-rings or webbing loops.

BlackRapid's tripod plate is designed for tripod/sling users and lets you swap an existing Arca-compatible plate with the company's Tripod Plate 50 or 70. This allows you to switch from tripod mounting



to an R-strap, without having to unscrew the plate. It comes with BlackRapid's FastenR Tripod screw, fits all 1/4-20 sockets, and is available in 50 and 70mm sizes.

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TOOLS / GEARED UP

Who's It For: Outdoor photographers who value utility, function, and ruggedness.

Why I Like It: Indestructible build quality makes BlackRapid the Pelican case of camera straps.



Manfrotto's Off Road Aluminum Walking Sticks (\$99) are an alternative to monopods, something I hope to cover in a future *Geared Up*. They're designed for hiking in smooth or rough terrain, sand or snow while supporting you and a camera. The sticks have ergonomic handgrips with wrist straps and feature three-section telescoping twist-to-lock tubes that extend from 23.4 to 52.1 inches. Each walking stick has a spiked base but sand/snow baskets and

rubber feet are included. One of the two sticks has a camera mount on its handgrip with a thumbscrew and a 1/4-20 threaded mount with a protective cap covering the mount when not in use.

Who's It For: Hikers, walkers, and casual photographers who find that a walk in the woods clears one's head.

Why I Like It: Having a walking stick is handy for a hiker. Having one that doubles as a tripod is a bonus.



PROTECTING YOUR GEAR

I've often written about using the free rain covers hotels provide that are usually mislabeled "shower caps" but when you get serious about photography, it's time to get serious about rain gear. Think Tank Photo's Hydrophobia 70-200 (\$149) is a serious rain cover for SLRs with a 70-200mm f/2.8 or similar lens. It's made from seam-sealed rip-stop fabric plus polyurethane film and nylon tricot with a high-density shock cord, nylon webbing, and polyurethane seam tape. The Hydrophobia uses weather-resistant zippers and has nickel-plated hardware. For longer lenses, the Hydrophobia 300-600 V2.0 (\$169) protects an SLR wearing a 300mm f/2.8 up to a 600mm f/4 and lens hood. The Hydrophobia 300-600 V2.0 uses the same heavy-duty construction and allows full camera operation while protecting it from rain, snow, and even blowing sand.

Who's It For: Sports photographers who have to get the shot, weather or not.

Why I Like It: Think Tank's build quality is impressive and will stand up to the weather and abuse shooters will give it.



MindShift Gear offers protection for you when you find yourself working in wet or dirty environments and need a clean, dry work area. The 3.5x5-foot Contact Sheet (\$39) is a ground tarp that uses lightweight, waterproof rip-stop fabric to provide a barrier from the elements and stuffs into the (included) mesh pouch to keep it handy until you need it.



Who's It For: For photographers who value utility, function, and ruggedness.

Why I Like It: It's a dirty world out there and sometimes a simple, easy-to-pack accessory, like Contact Sheet, can make it a less grimy one.



LensCoat's TravelHood is a lighter weight alternative to the heavy, rigid lens hood. The TravelHood Large

(\$119) is designed for 400mm f/2.8, 600mm f/4, and 800mm f/5.6 lenses while the TravelHood Small (\$109) is intended for 300mm f/2.8, 200-400mm f/4, 400mm f/4 DO, and 500mm f/4 lenses. The hood is constructed from lightweight water-resistant material with a ribbed design that allows it to fold nearly flat for storage. TravelHoods are available in Black, Realtree Max4, Digital Camo, Forest Green Camo, and Realtree AP Snow.

LensCoat's LensSack Pro series (\$119) has a removable aircraft-grade aluminum mounting plate that lets you attach a gimbal or ball head. The plate can be removed, allowing LensSack Pro to be used as a standard beanbag camera/lens support. LensSacks feature the same heavy-duty, water-resistant Cordura as TravelHoods and are delivered empty so you can add the fill of your choice. Made in the U.S.A., LensSacks are available in Black, Digital Camo, Forest Green Camo, Realtree Max4, and Realtree AP Snow.



Who's It For: Wildlife photographers who need to travel light and be inconspicuous.

Why I Like It: Well-made, specialized products like this are a perfect fit for wildlife photographers who need to protect their gear and blend in with nature.

In the past, I've written that "a clean camera is a happy camera" and one of the best ways to keep your lens and shiny bits clean is by using LensPen products. Their OutdoorPro Kit (\$34) includes an original LensPen, MiniPro, MicroKlear microfiber cloth, FogKlear anti-fog cloth, and a nylon zipper bag with belt loop. With action cams becoming more popular, LensPen offers their Action Camera Lens Cleaner (\$34) for cleaning lenses on GoPro and other action cams.



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Who's It For: Everybody who has a camera needs a LensPen.
Why I Like It: Keeping lenses and gear clean makes it possible to see and capture better images and LensPen's quality products have been keeping my gear clean for 20 years.

I've always believed using some kind of protection filter is a good idea, especially when shooting outdoors. One of the problems with using filters on wide-angle or wide-angle zoom lenses is their thick rim can cause vignetting but Cokin's Pure Harmonie Multi-Coated Anti-UV filters are only 3.3mm thick. The series also includes a 4.5mm thick Circular Polarizer and a 9.5mm thick Variable Density Neutral Gray filter that lets you select intensity from one to eight stops.



Who's It For: Shooters working in tough environments with lots of blowing snow, sand, or whatever. It's not for perfectionists who don't mind spending money repairing their lenses.
Why I Like It: The elegant design of Cokin's Pure Harmonie filters is not only aesthetically pleasing but functionally practical.

LITTLE THINGS HELP A LOT

In December I talked about action cameras becoming more ubiquitous and that's also true of accessories for them. Joby's GorillaPod Action Tripod with GoPro Mount (\$23) is a mini-tripod designed for action cams and small cameras weighing up to 2.2 pounds, so some mirrorless cameras should work too. It features flexible legs with more than two dozen joints that bend and rotate 360 degrees, allowing you to secure your camera



almost anywhere. The rubberized ring and foot grips provide stability and it only weighs 6.7 ounces. An aluminum ball head provides 360 degrees of pan and plus and minus 90 degrees of tilt and it comes with two quick-release plates; one for GoPro cameras and a

standard 1/4-20 screw.

Joby's Action Clamp with Locking Arm (\$23) offers a simple way to mount an action cam onto flat and round surfaces. The Clamp attaches to objects up to two-inches wide and has a tightening screw for a firm grip. The Locking Arm features two ball joints that can rotate 360 degrees and pivot 180 degrees from side to side. This lets you position your action camera to get the right angle for your shot. You can attach an action cam via a 1/4-20 screw or the included GoPro mount.



Who's It For: Action cam photographers.
Why I Like It: Long a fan of the GorillaPod (I own two), Joby knows a lot about making compact and versatile support systems.



The Acratech Double Axis Spirit Level mounts into any standard hot/cold shoe mount. It's different from other bubble levels because its double axis allows simultaneously positioning of horizontal and vertical axes. It's an inexpensive (\$24) accessory that's perfect

for landscapes, especially for panoramic photography.
Who's It For: Landscape photographers, panoramic shooters, and perfectionists who need to keep their images level.
Why I Like It: There are inexpensive bubble levels for cameras available but Acratech's is clearly the class of the field.

Really Right Stuff's Pano Elements kit (\$360) combines a panning device for rotating and a nodal slide for positioning your lens at the proper point to eliminate parallax for non-collared lenses from 16mm and up. This package mounts via a built-in dovetail atop your ball head or leveling base. A built-in spirit level and laser-engraved scale on either side permits precise positioning. The clamp features a central 3/8-16 threaded socket and includes a 1/4-20 head for mounting directly to Really Right Stuff and Arca-Swiss ball heads.



Who's It For: Landscape and panoramic shooters.
Why I Like It: Really Right Stuff gear, while expensive, is built like a Hasselblad 500C, solidly and precisely engineered and constructed. ■

Joe Farace shoots digital SLRs and mirrorless cameras to make personal photographs as well as the images you see in Shutterbug. If you're curious about the specific gear he uses, visit his websites (joefarace.com and mirrorlessphototips.com) and click the Gear tab.



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LEICA SL

TEST DRIVING LEICA'S NEW FULL-FRAME MIRRORLESS CAMERA SYSTEM

By Jon Sienkiewicz



Product shots courtesy of Leica Camera AG



THE LEICA SL (TYP 601) MIRRORLESS CAMERA SYSTEM is designed to take on not just rival mirrorless cameras but to, potentially, lure pro DSLR users to switch to this high-end system, which combines what the company claims to be the fastest autofocus on the market with a speedy 11 fps burst rate and 4K video capture.

I got my hands on an early production unit of the Leica SL (Typ 601) mirrorless full-frame camera along with the new Leica Vario-Elmarit-SL 24-90mm f/2.8-4.0 Aspheric zoom lens and took it for a test drive.

The Leica SL looks a bit like a rangefinder camera, but it's not. It's a straight-up mirrorless interchangeable lens system camera equipped with an Electronic Viewfinder (EVF). Because it's a Leica, you expect it to be well made and fun to use. But it doesn't take long for you to realize that this is unlike any other Leica you've ever known.

LEICA L LENS MOUNT

The Leica SL's lens mount is entirely new, labeled "Leica L," but it does not completely forsake older Leica mounts. With the appropriate adapter, the new Leica SL is compatible with lenses from the Leica T Camera System, Leica M-Lenses with Leica M-Adapter T, Leica S-Lenses with Leica S-Adapter L, Leica R-Lenses with Leica R-Adapter L, and Leica Cine Lenses with Leica PL-Adapter L.

Shot at ISO 50, 86mm, 1/90 second at f/4.8.

Photos © Jon Sienkiewicz

Leica has announced the first three lenses that are made specifically for the new SL. They are the Vario-Elmarit-SL 24-90mm f/2.8-4.0 Aspheric (available now), the APO-Vario-Elmarit-SL 90-280mm f/2.8-4.0 (available in early 2016), and the Summilux-SL 50mm f/1.4 Aspheric (available in late 2016). Both zooms are equipped with image stabilization.

SENSOR & SIGNAL PROCESSOR

The Leica SL's image sensor is a full-frame (24x36mm), 24-megapixel CMOS with a maximum resolution of 6000x4000 pixels. The sensor module is equipped with an IR cut-off filter but it has no low-pass (anti-aliasing) filter.

As contradictory as this may sound, low-pass filters introduce an intentional blur that remediates the moiré pattern sometimes caused by certain complex textures. Therefore, without a low-pass filter, the Leica SL has the potential to deliver sharper images than cameras that have a low-pass filter.

The ASIC (Application Specific Integrated Circuit) is from the Leica Maestro II family. The film-equivalent ISO sensitivity range is from ISO 50 to 50,000. I did very limited low-light, high ISO shooting but I was impressed by the image quality when maximum gain was set (i.e., ISO 50,000).

CAMERA BUILD

The Leica SL camera body is hewn from milled aluminum and is a commanding size, measuring 147x104x39mm—that's 5.7x4.1x1.5 inches (WxHxD). Weight is a svelte 30 ounces (847 grams) with battery.

To describe the build quality of the Leica SL camera as being "outstanding" would be like saying that an atomic bomb is drastic. Shooting with the SL begins with rich tactile feedback when your fingers first embrace the camera body and then heightens until the moment you press the shutter and hear the dampened, authoritative *thunk!*

On the back you'll find a 2.95-inch, backlit, touch-sensitive LED with an anti-fingerprint and anti-scratch coating and 1-million pixel resolution. It provides the canvas for Live View composition as well as reviewing captured images. Viewing angle is 170 degrees and frame coverage is a reassuring 100 percent.

Surrounding the LED monitor there are four unmarked, multifunction buttons. Button labels appear in the four corners of the monitor. There is a large, knurled dial on the top and a smaller one

on the front.

To change exposure modes, Leica has provided a press-and-turn wheel located where the shooter's thumb naturally falls. Push once to conjure up Mode Selection, and then move the wheel left or right to rotate through modes. During initial shakedown flights with this camera I accidentally changed modes more often than reasonable, but I learned to cope by confirming that I was in the right mode before shooting.

The Leica SL's impressive eye-level finder is electronic (EVF) with a

resolution of 4.4 megapixels, a high-eye point of 20mm (good news for eyeglass wearers like yours truly), and a 37 degree Field of View. Magnification is 0.8x and best of all, frame coverage is 100 percent.

This dynamic EVF has an eye sensor that can optionally switch automatically from viewing the EVF to the LED on the back and has built-in diopter correction (-4 to +2 diopters). I am farsighted and wear corrective lenses and I found the EVF to be bright and easy to use—in fact, even in dim locations, the viewfinder is startlingly bright and contrasty—which

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To the left, is an image showing the Graslon Prodigy without its diffusion lens. Take a look at the patent-pending IBT mirror system inside; the goal is to first enlarge the light from the flash before sending it through the diffusion lens, making it incredibly soft.



* Diffusion lens removed for display purposes. Not intended for use without diffusion lens.

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Shot at ISO 100, 90mm, 1/50 second at f/4.

made using the Focus Peaking feature in Manual Focus a genuine pleasure.

Up top, near the shutter release there is a monochrome LCD Status Monitor that features an anti-fingerprint coating and displays exposure information, mode, frames left, etc.—the usual stuff.

The only official documentation available to me, at press time, about the Leica SL's weatherproofing states that "Dust/Spray water sealing is provided." As of this writing, no one at Leica can provide the JIS or IP classification. I refuse to speculate and advise you to avoid wet or dusty environments and treat this camera the same way you would any other expensive camera. Better safe than sorry.

24-90MM F/2.8-4.0 ZOOM LENS

The lens that I evaluated with the Leica

SL is a Leica Vario-Elmarit-SL 24-90mm f/2.8-4.0 Aspheric zoom. Because of the size and weight, at first I thought the zoom was a constant aperture f/2.8. I think it's big enough to be, or at least nearly so.

It's large and beefy—not much smaller than a quart oil can (I'm exaggerating, but not much) and is so heavy that it set off the seatbelt warning light on the passenger seat in my Subaru. True story.

But I immediately forgot the weight and my sore neck once I saw the results. The output from this combination is exceptional, and the zoom range—24mm wide angle to 90mm portrait/short tele—is all many people need for a lifetime of shooting situations. Nonetheless, I look forward to an opportunity to do some street shooting with the Leica SL and some lighter weight optics.



Shot at ISO 50, 90mm, 1/250 second at f/4.

CAMERA OPERATION

Top shutter speed is 1/8000 second and frame rate options are Single, Continuous S (slow, 4 fps), Continuous M (medium, 7 fps), Continuous F (fast, 11 fps). Also available, Interval and of course Self-timers (two durations) and Exposure Bracketing. Time exposures can be set for up to 30 minutes. The significant spec here is the available 11 fps shooting speed.

As one might expect, the Leica SL provides the standard four exposure modes, namely Program Mode, Shutter Priority (labeled "T"), Aperture Priority, and Manual. Flash sync is 1/250 second. Mode selection is accomplished via a press-and-turn-the-wheel process that is described above.

Like any menu system, theirs took a little while getting used to. I made a lot of mistakes trying to find and adjust specific settings but I gradually improved. Some. Despite my clumsiness and the menu's lack of intuitive structure I was able to change things fast enough during real-life shooting sessions and didn't miss any shots. However, reportedly I did utter some colorful words.

AUTOFOCUS

The Leica SL uses Contrast AF and offers four focus modes: AF-S (single, focus priority), AF-C (continuous, shutter priority), Manual Focus (with Focus Peaking aide), and Touch-AF via the LED monitor. Available Autofocus modes are Static, Tracking, and Auto with Face Detection. The AF target options are Point, Field, and Zone (Zone is comprised of nine Fields). There are a total of 49 focus fields available.

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"WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED"

LensCoat makes unique, protective covers for camera lenses, bodies, and accessories. Made from 100% closed-cell neoprene, LensCoat products protect your gear from bumps and scratches, they keep rain and mist away from sensitive equipment, and they also insulate your hands from cold equipment. Most products are available in Camouflage patterns Forest Green, Realtree AP Snow, Realtree Max4 HD, and Digital Camo all designed to blend in with different environments as well as solid colors (black, blue, green, pink or purple).

LensCoat protective covers slide on and off like a sleeve, leaving no residue. Some covers feature clear, flexible UV-PVC windows over important controls and displays, allowing you to use the equipment with the cover on.

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- Available with a custom fit for most popular lenses
- Also available in white for Canon lenses



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- Removable reinforced insert panels allow you to configure the weight and support
- Removable harness (sold separately)
- Multiple connection points to secure the bag
- Built to last with heavy-duty water-resistant Codura and lightweight, water-resistant nylon lining
- Soft sided construction allow the bag to be folded nearly flat
- M.O.L.L.E webbing system to easily add pouches & accessories
- Expandable exterior mesh pocket
- Available in Black, Digital Camo, Forest Green Camo, or Realtree Max4 • Made in the USA



Shown with optional harness

3Xpandable Internal dimensions 8" x 8" x 19.75" or 23.5" or 27.75"
Accommodates camera body with lenses such as Canon 200-400mm, 300mm f/2.8, 400mm DO, 500mm, Nikon 200-400mm, 300 f/2.8, 500mm, Sigma 500mm, 300-800mm, Sony 500mm

4Xpandable Internal dimensions 9" x 9" x 21.5" or 24.5" or 28.75"
Accommodates camera body and lens such as Canon & Nikon 400mm f/2.8, 500mm, 600mm, 800mm



Folded Flat

RAINCOAT 2

LensCoat® RainCoat 2 provides protection for your camera and lens from the elements like rain, snow, salt spray, dirt, sand and dust while allowing you easy access to the camera and lens controls. It has all same great features as the original RainCoat but adds an additional integrated pocket with foldaway arm sleeve on the left side for easier access to zoom and focus. The RainCoat 2 comes in two sizes **Pro** (for DSLRs with lenses from 300mm f2.8 - 800mm) and **Standard** (for DSLRs with small lenses up to 400mm f5.6). The RainCoat 2 is constructed from a lightweight waterproof, breathable poly tricot material. The seams are tape sealed for maximum protection.

- Lightweight waterproof, breathable poly tricot material
- Made in the USA
- Cinch Straps adjust cover length by folding the material over itself & keep cover snug
- Adjustable rear access with cord lock
- NO dedicated eyepiece required

Pro 30.5" 11.6oz (hood extension for 600mm & 800mm 8" 2.4oz)

Standard 20.5" 9.4oz



Available in 7 Patterns/Colors

Hoodie Lens Caps

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- Features a reinforced removable front protection disc
- Available in 9 colors (5 solid & 4 camo)



X-Small	2.75" to 3.25"	X-Large	4.75" to 5.25"
Small	3.25" to 3.75"	XX-Large	5.5" to 6.25"
Medium	3.75" to 4.25"	XXX-Large	6.25" to 7"
Large	4.25" to 4.75"	XXXX-Large	7" to 7.75"

LegCoat Wraps (set of 3)

- Wrap around the upper leg of your tripod
- Tightly grips to your tripod so they will not slide

LegCoat Tripod Covers

- Velcro fasteners allow for easy assembly
- Preserve the fit and finish and resale value of your tripod
- Protect your shoulder when carrying your gear



Other Innovations from LensCoat®

- TravelCoat • Lens Pouches • FlashKeeper • Ipad sleeve
- Gimbal Pouch & Cover • Better Beamer cover • BeamerKeeper





Shot at ISO 125, 80mm, 1/60 second at f/3.9.

Built-in Wi-Fi is the standard 802.11 b/g/n and GPS sensitivity is precise to less than one degree. The GPS of course has automatic time and date functions. I like to remind readers that if they shoot images of their home and capture the GPS coordinates they should scrub

the metadata before posting the image publicly—otherwise they are revealing their home's location to potential wrongdoers.

Power is supplied by a single rechargeable, 1860 mAh lithium-ion battery with a rated capacity of about 400

shots per charge. In practice I found that spec to be conservative. The battery has an interesting two-stage ejection system that I did not immediately grasp. Move the release lever a couple of millimeters and the battery pops up above the level of the baseplate but remains locked into the camera. To release you press the battery all the way back down and it lunges free.

IMAGE QUALITY

The Leica SL coupled with the Leica Vario-Elmarit-SL 24-90mm zoom delivers phenomenal image quality. In fact, it may be the best I've ever seen in a full-frame camera. I frankly did not have the sample long enough to conduct side-by-side, pixel-peeping comparisons with other similar camera systems, but I strongly suspect that if I had, the Leica SL would have emerged as the winner.

Not everything was perfect, however. Images captured at the default settings in Program Mode are a bit too contrasty and too highly saturated for my taste, but judge for yourself by reviewing the images accompanying this review.

VIDEO AND AUDIO

The Leica SL captures 4K video and offers several choices of resolution: (4096x2160) at 24 fps; 4K (3840x2160) at 25 and 30 fps; 1080 at 24, 25, 30, 50, 60, 100, and 120 fps; 720 at 24, 25, 30, 50, 60, 100, and 120 fps. Maximum video length is 29 minutes, maximum size 4GB. Interfaces for video and/or image transfer are USB 3.0 (Micro Type B) and HDMI (Type A).

On the audio recording side, the camera is complete with stereo microphones (48 kHz, 16-bit) with built-in wind noise elimination masking. External microphone input and output jacks are standard 3.5mm stereo phone jacks.

CONCLUSION

Leica cameras are expensive, no other way to say it. In the past I always felt comfortable suggesting that potential buyers could justify the cost because of the build quality, pride of ownership, superlative tactile feedback, and indisputably excellent optics. This is the first time I can add outstanding performance and exceptional image quality to the rationale. The Leica SL is a pleasure to use. More importantly, it captures extraordinary images shot after shot.

The Leica SL (Type 601) sells for \$7,450, body only, while the Vario-Elmarit-SL 24-90mm f/2.8-4.0 ASPH zoom lens goes for \$4,950. ■

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PMG Ball Head

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L-Brackets

L-Brackets are essential if you will need to change the orientation of your photographs from landscape to portrait in a hurry without recomposition. Universal and Custom L-Brackets available. Arca-Type Compatible



Camera Plates / Clamps

Arca-Type compatible plates are custom designed to match the specifications of the camera body shape therefore providing a slim unobtrusive design with anti-rotation. Arca-Type compatible quick release clamps are designed to fit any standard Arca-Type Plates, and L-Brackets.



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The GRIP&SHOOT™ lets you take pictures and video wirelessly. When attached to your phone via Jawz universal holder or Shooter Case it also reduces shaky video and blurry pictures.



ROTOLIGHT NEO

DOES A NEW LED LIGHTING TOOL PROVIDE A “GOLDILOCKS” SOLUTION? *By Joe Farace*

LED LIGHTING IS ALL THE RAGE with the cool kids and why not? It’s continuous and that’s important for new photographers or anyone wishing to capture hybrid—video and still—imagery. It’s also literally cool, with no eyebrow-melting hot lights making subjects uncomfortable.

In the not-so-distant past, the biggest problem was that LEDs weren’t all that bright and color balance could be tricky for shooters new to LED lighting. It’s these final two pieces of the puzzle that’s seemingly solved by Rotolight’s NEO.

BUILD AND FEATURES

In Rotolight’s product lineup, NEO comfortably fits between the compact RL48 and the *big kahuna* Anova, offering a “Goldilocks” solution by happily blending features of each light while adding a few new ones. NEO delivers 1077 lux at

three feet and is slightly larger (5.7-inch diameter vs. 5.3) than the RL48 that produces 242 lux. The new light contains 120 LEDs with a 50-degree beam angle and since Rotolight’s LEDs ensure against Wave Pulse Modulation, there’s no output-robbing flicker.



NEO appears solidly built with more on-board electronics, weighing in at 12.5 ounces compared to the RL48’s six ounces. It requires six AA cells compared to the RL48’s three or you can use an AC adapter or D-Tap power cable, something the RL48 does not offer.

Batteries give three hours of continuous use at 100 percent power (longer with lower power levels) and I prefer to use NEO that way because there are fewer cords for me to trip over. The rear display can be turned off or dimmed, providing additional run time when using batteries.

NEO has an overall Color Rendering Index of 95 with a skin tone reproduction rating of 99—out of 100. Color temperature is adjustable using a rear-mounted rotary knob from 3150 to 6300K in 10-degree steps. Brightness is adjustable from 1 to 100 percent in 1 percent steps while a Dynamic Drift Compensation driver built into NEO prevents color shifts during changes in brightness.

To calculate correct aperture, NEO uses the camera’s shutter speed, ISO, and distance to the subject along with data from the light itself. As you adjust the distance from your subject or the NEO’s brightness, you re-enter the relevant settings into NEO and it displays the updated recommended aperture.

In the “now for something completely different” department, for video and hybrid shooters NEO offers SFX Mode, featuring a menu of special lighting effects where you can also control brightness. Effects include: Strobe light, from a slower to a faster strobing effect; TV for a random flicker, mimicking the effect of a subject watching television; Police car’s rooftop lights; Fire, from candle to campfire to all-out blaze; Lightning and others, including Cycle and Throb. You can even program a 12-second repeatable fade up or down command. NEO’s firmware can be updated using a port in the battery compartment.

Rotolight’s NEO 3 Light Kit (\$1,698) includes three NEOs with a Lee Color FX filter pack, three Lee standard filter packs, three shoe to 1/4-inch studs adapter, three ball heads, and three seven-foot light stands all packed into a waterproof Pelican-style rolling case. The standard filter pack contains #216 and #250 Diffusion, #184 Cosmetic Peach, and #279 Minus Green filters. Color FX filters are Hollywood Frost (#255), Straw (#103), Rust (#777), Medium Blue-Green (#116), Bright Pink (#128), Moroccan Frost (#791), Mist Blue (#061), Bedford Blue (#712), Light Red (#182), and, no kidding, Bastard Amber (#162).

Product shots courtesy of Rotolight

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IN THE STUDIO

NEO has a rubberized and rugged housing that provides additional protection in the studio or on location. For outdoor shoots, the light has an IP (Ingress Protection) rating of 23 and for extra rain protection, Portabrace offers a rain cover.

Set up is simple. Each NEO has a 1/4-20 threaded mounting hole with a 360-degree swivel shoe mount. I removed that and mounted the lights to the kit's ball heads, making it easy to attach to Manfrotto

Nano-like light stands. NEO has a Fast mode (pushing in, while turning) that allows you to make adjustments quicker but you might want to poke around with the controls until you get the hang of it. Initial testing in my home studio produced good results at a nominal ISO setting of 800 but this changed throughout the shoot based on lighting setup, filters, and lens used. Check captions for exposure data.

For this test I used Savage's new printed background papers, which are



Photographer and friend Cliff Lawson loaned me his Chimera Octa 2, a 24-inch Collapsible Beauty Dish, to soften the light. It was attached to the NEO used as a key light and mounted on a LumoPro Double Flash Bracket (\$49) attached to the NEO via its 1/4-20 socket. A tightening knob on the bracket prevented the NEO from being fully perpendicular. If this were my personal gear I'd grind the ears on the knob to make additional space or maybe use Chimera's Adjustable Versi Bracket Octa Speed Ring (\$116) and not have to make any modifications.



For the first lighting setup, I used all three NEOs with Savage's Weathered Brick printed background. The main light with a 24-inch Chimera beauty dish was set at 100 percent output and 5500K degrees and placed at camera right. The NEO used for fill was set at 42 percent to maintain a normal, whatever that is, lighting ratio. The output of the accent light at camera left was continuously tweaked during this session to produce the desired effect.

Photos © Joe Farace

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For this image with Savage's Gray Floral backdrop, I used a Panasonic Lumix GH4 camera with an Olympus 45mm f/1.8 lens and a final exposure of 1/100 second at f/1.8 and ISO 640. There's some light falloff from NEO's 50-degree coverage but I feel it works for three-quarter length portraits. If I were doing full-length shots—tough to do in this space—I would probably stack two NEOs to provide smoother, more even overall lighting.

For the second setup, I used all three NEO lights with Savage's Gray Floral printed background. The main light had an Adorama 33-inch Translucent Umbrella (\$12) mounted on the light stand using Adorama's Universal Swivel Holder Umbrella Bracket with adjustable flash mount (\$17). The main light was set at 100 percent output and 5500K degrees and placed at camera right. The NEO used for fill was set at 20 percent to maintain a balanced lighting ratio. The output of the accent light at camera left was 50 percent.

available in 53-inch wide x 18-foot long rolls. They feature realistic backgrounds, including wood, brick, or bokeh, and appear printed on material a bit thicker than Savage's seamless papers. I used them with Savage's almost eight-foot-high Economy Stand that will support backgrounds up to 10-feet wide.

For this test, I wanted to experiment with different kinds of light modifiers and for the first series of shots with Savage's Weathered Brick backdrop I used Chimera's Octa 2, a 24-inch Collapsible Beauty Dish, to soften the main light. The other two lights were used as fill and backlight as shown in the setup illustration.

For the second setup, I replaced the beauty dish with a 33-inch translucent umbrella used in shoot-through mode to provide soft light. All of the lights were run off AA battery power, making moving the lights around my 11x15-foot studio a snap—no cords—especially when it was

uncharacteristically crowded with five people. Battery power never once faltered and the lights remained on during the entire session.

CONCLUSION

The Rotolight NEO LED lighting system is in many ways a breakthrough system that may just herald in a new wave of lighting for portrait photography, including hybrid image making. The lights are simple to operate yet provide a wide range of complex and interesting possibilities. While not inexpensive, the three-light kit is turnkey, especially for photographers who don't already own light stands and other studio accessories. For them, it's a bargain. ■

Acknowledgments: Many thanks to model Sarah Dean and photographer Cliff Lawson who was of immense assistance as well as inspiration when we were working together on these lighting setups with the NEOs.

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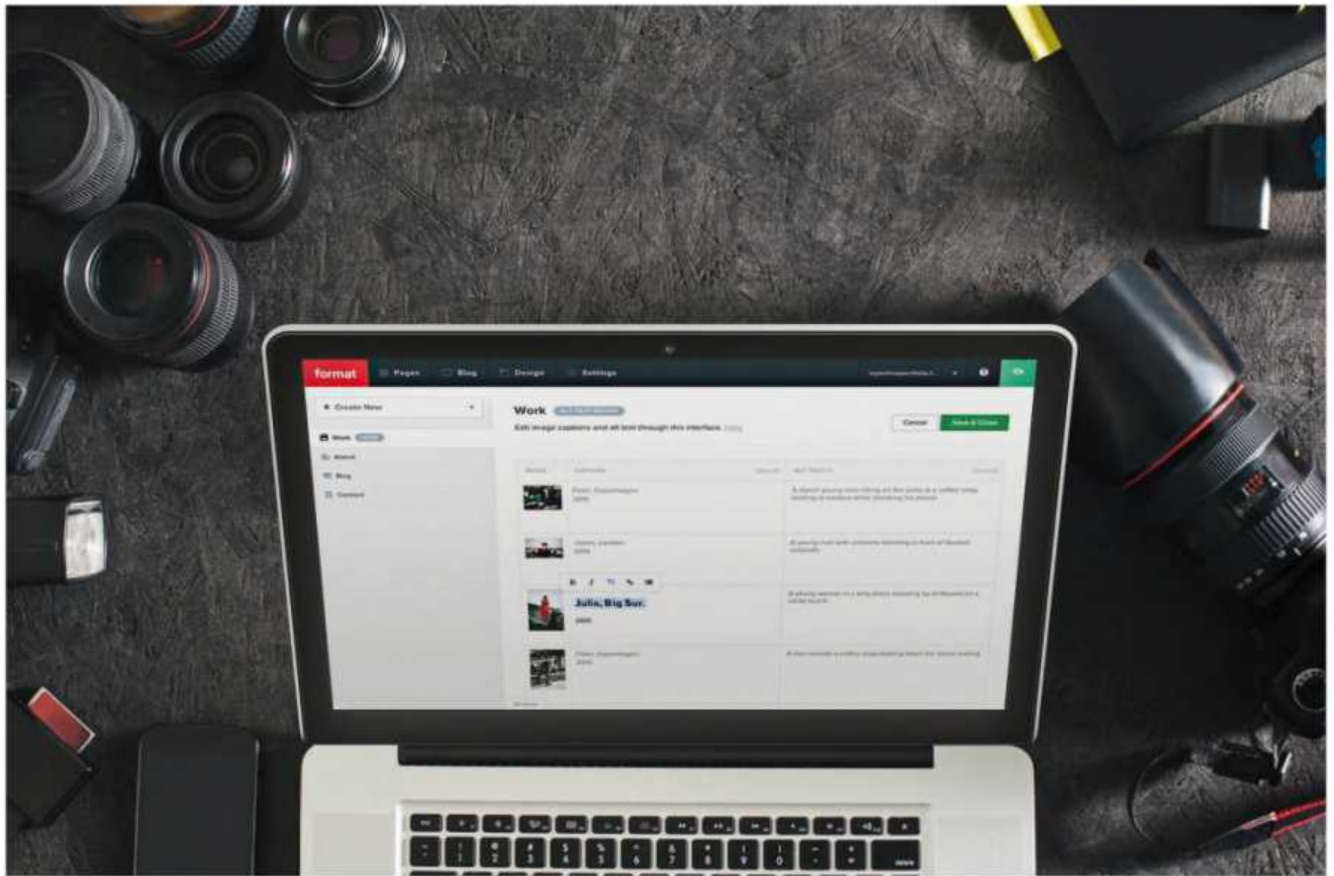


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GET YOUR PHOTOS OUT THERE!

HOW TO PROMOTE YOUR WORK ONLINE AND THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA *By Maria Piscopo*

THERE ARE MANY PHOTOGRAPHY BUSINESSES today successfully using online and social media marketing tools and techniques to make sales. But converting followers or web visitors to actual clients is still more art than science. We interviewed a group of market-savvy photographers to learn their tips on how to best promote your photography on the web. Thanks to our contributors: Marguerite Beaty, Crea8fotos; Lukas Dryja, CEO and Co-Founder of Format.com; Brian McMillen, BKM Photography; and Ian L. Sitren, Second Focus.

Shutterbug: What marketing features should a photographer look for when selecting an online portfolio service?

Ian L. Sitren: An online portfolio must provide ease of use, fast loading of large high-quality images across all monitor and system types as well as mobile, and total reliability. Do not build your own website or have some buddy do it for you when he gets off work at his regular job. There is too much to learn in the way of Internet website technology for you to ever keep up with and try to be in the business of being a photographer. And when that buddy who built and maintains your website gets a divorce and his wife gets the computer, your business goes down the drain. Scenarios like that happen all the

time. If you want to be a professional, be professional and get a professional online portfolio website that is specifically for photographers.

Marguerite Beaty: It would be ideal to have an opt-in page to obtain e-mail addresses. Also, photographers should be able to add written information that will help their SEO and add their social media platforms. For example, adding Instagram is important as it will show a few more images and it will give the viewer a little window into the photographer's life. A blog will help people understand more about the photographer's working philosophies and obtain useful information. A blog will also help with SEO. It would be great to have an area to show videos. Photographers

can show behind-the-scenes short videos or tips for getting ready for a shoot or fun photo experiences. The portfolio sites should be clean and interactive.

Lukas Dryja: First and foremost, a photographer should look for a website that works quickly on mobile. With more and more people consuming content on the go, there's no excuse for slow load times and poor mobile design. Next, look for SEO tools that help make your content more discoverable. With Format, online portfolios are optimized so Google and other search engines can easily index your website. We've also just launched a new alt text editor, improving website accessibility and search engine indexing for imagery. To make it easier to share your latest work with the world, choose a service that links to your social media handles and allows you to share content directly from the application. Last but not least, look for a service that celebrates and promotes its community. You never know what kinds of new opportunities that exposure may bring.

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Brian McMillen: I personally don't use any online marketing that does not give me leads to the brides (my potential clients). I want actual phone numbers, e-mails, names, dates, budgets. This way, for the money I am spending, I get real contacts to the people making the decision to hire me.

SB: What are the best ways to build traffic for your online portfolio?

Ian L. Sitren: I really think all of this talk about SEO (Search Engine Optimization) is overblown. For one thing, if you have a well-designed website and follow all of the keywording and such, the website company should have all of the SEO working for you. Your website or online portfolio is really your office. That is where you tell people to come and see you.

Marguerite Beaty: I believe that an opt-in is a good idea. I also think that one has to find ways to interact with the potential customer and so I believe that the use of videos is becoming more and more important. Plus all the blogs and social media should guide the viewer to the website with the site's address.

Brian McMillen: You can send out informational e-mails on how to hire a photographer, what to look for and

what to ask, and be helpful—it's not all about a hard sell "hire me." Educate your clients, I think the biggest problem with photographers these days is they don't try to educate the customer.

Lukas Dryja: Focus on filling your website with great work and getting it noticed. Here are a few suggestions: Drive people from your various social networks and communities to a central location (your portfolio) where you carefully curate their experience. Share your online portfolio with your personal, professional, and online networks. When someone appreciates your art, they'll be inclined to share it with others too. Connect with publications that cover your caliber and stream of work. Often they are happy to promote undiscovered talent and they'll link to your site in a feature article. The more profiles and stories linking to your portfolio, the better your SEO position in Google and other search engines will be.

SB: How do you convert online visitors to photography clients?

Ian L. Sitren: It is very important to not oversell. I see other photographers constantly, many times per day, specifically telling and asking people to shoot with them or magazines to hire them. It comes across as begging and very

unprofessional. Learn to soft sell! Just let people know what you do and let your work speak for itself.

Marguerite Beaty: This is the most important part of marketing. I think that once the customer is on the site there should be easy ways for the customer to speak to the photographer. A phone number and an e-mail address should be available.

Lukas Dryja: Clients will be most likely to engage you when they identify with your work. So consider your strengths and hone in on a specialty that you know you can excel at and know that clients desire. Perfect this work and become known for it. Next, build a website that best represents your brand and aesthetic. Be sure to edit your body of work to showcase your best photography up front—so the attention of the visitor is captured immediately. Once you've attracted people to your site, make it both easy for them to get in touch with you now and to stay up to date with your news. Consider an e-newsletter.

Brian McMillen: I don't post my prices but if clients fill out a short form on what they are interested in they will get an instant quote; they can't do this without giving me contact info. With that contact information, I quickly follow up.

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SB: How should the different social media and mobile apps be used to promote a photography business?

Ian L. Sitren: Social media provides immediate and free access to everyone. You should be using it to expand your circle of friends and followers. Let them see what you do and know what you do. Just the same as the people you have drinks with on Friday night or see at the gym. The more people in your social group will mean more people likely to use or recommend your services.

Lukas Dryja: Social media is a great avenue for storytelling. I find it is best used to add a human element to one's practice: share tips, post behind-the-scenes photos, gather feedback, crowdsource solutions from industry

professionals, and interact with clients. But it's important to remember that these profiles—like your website—are a representation of your brand. It's better to properly maintain three select channels than slack on 10.

Look for mobile tools that make it easier—not harder—to manage your presence and work on the go. For example, the free iPad app, Kredo, saves you time by serving dual purposes; it's both an in-person presentation tool and global discovery network.

Marguerite Beaty: They should be used as a marketing tool to gain exposure before thinking about sales. Mobile apps should have a call to action and a site address or at least the site address if it's not possible to add more. The photographer should know his or her customer very well and

communicate in a way that will relate to them. It's important to know how much selling should be done and how much sharing should be done. I could give a number here but I really think that if you know your customer well you will know how to communicate with them. The only thing I can say is that if a site is only about sales, it will turn people off.

When you find out what social media platforms your customers and potential customers use you can communicate on a different level. Here are some tips: Are your customers female? Get on Pinterest. Instagram allows you to tag someone. You can write interesting tips or information about a subject and tag a specific person. Comment on their posts a few times a week. Show them that you support them and that you are interested in their views. I find that this is something people are forgetting to do. Everyone is so worried about getting more followers. I believe that it's a good idea to focus on good followers. You should post videos that educate people in a fun way about your product and your business. I think people may want to pay more attention to Periscope. It was bought by Twitter and it's a video platform. It's a cool platform. Use it strategically to show behind-the-scenes work. ■

RESOURCES

MARGUERITE BEATY: [linkedin.com/in/margueritebeaty](https://www.linkedin.com/in/margueritebeaty)
LUKAS DRYJA: format.com
BRIAN MCMILLEN: bkmphoto.com
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This photo was captured during a storm at Glacier National Park when everyone else ran for cover. The rainbow happened while I was getting soaked to the bone but I still got the shot!

image quality and autofocus using a point-and-shoot camera, I also know that in these participatory adventures I never would have made it to the summit in the first place carrying my heavy DSLR kit.

2. CAMERA PACK VS. CHEST PACK

First give that old shoulder bag back to your grandpa. For serious outdoor photo adventures, one needs a serious camera backpack or a chest pack. Having tried all sorts of packs over the years, F-stop photo bags, for my money, carry as well or better than my regular climbing packs, while still giving me easy access to my camera no matter how bad the weather is.

On the other hand, if it is more of a participatory adventure where I know I won't have the time to stop and do a "proper" photo shoot, I carry my simplified camera kit on the outside of my pack in a chest pack or belt system like those made by Think Tank. This allows me to keep up with my companions as we hike/ski/climb but be ready to grab a quick shot when the situation presents itself.

3. PELICAN CASES

While not conducive to trips where weight is an issue, Pelican cases are standard photo fare anytime water or dust concerns arise. You can't do a river trip anywhere in the world without seeing these familiar cases in a wide range of sizes being used by guides and clients alike. Having taken thousands of dollars of camera gear down some of the most remote rivers in North America I wouldn't trust my gear to anything else. They are easy to use, come in a range of sizes (some with wheels), have simple user-replaceable O-rings (bring an extra on any big trip), are crushproof (nice seat around the campfire), and if strapped to a boat correctly allow nearly instant access to gear.



Portable but high-quality Micro Four Thirds compact system cameras are great for using in inclement weather because they're easy to stash. I always use one during snowstorms or bad weather on ski trips.

Photos © Josh Miller Photography

7 ESSENTIALS FOR EXTREME OUTDOOR PHOTOGRAPHY

HOW TO PREPARE FOR SHOOTING IN TOUGH CONDITIONS

By Josh Miller

WHILE EVERYONE'S DEFINITION of "extreme" is a little different, the one thing that can be said of extreme outdoor photography is it involves leaving the car far behind and dealing with whatever difficulties present themselves without running for cover. To help get you ready for your next extreme shoot, here are my seven most important tools for working in the wild under tough conditions.

1. LIGHTEN THE LOAD

Depending on the adventure, lightening your camera load can range from picking a full size but portable DSLR like a Nikon D800, to a Micro Four Thirds camera system, or all the way down to a quality compact. It all depends on how much hiking/climbing/skiing/rafting vs. shooting I expect to do. If I plan on

working near a base camp for several days, I choose the D800 with 16-35mm f/4 and 70-200mm f/4 lenses. But if I plan to be on the move a lot, my Olympus Micro Four Thirds system saves weight at the expense of fast autofocus and file size. On climbing trips where speed and weight are the top priority, I carry a high-end compact like the Sony RX100. While I am sacrificing



This is from a three-week trip down the Grand Canyon.

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I shot this during a two-week river trip in Alaska and the Yukon (and yes, those are icebergs and cold water).



This image was shot on a climb using a simple point-and-shoot camera. You don't always need a big camera to take a great photo.

4. SHOOT IN BAD WEATHER

Some of the best and most exciting photos happen in the worst conditions. Often I get my best images after everyone else has turned tail and run for their cars (even those with way more expensive and weatherproof cameras than my own). If there was one bit of advice I would give to aspiring photographers it would be this: your camera can take way more abuse than you think so stop worrying about scratches and start thinking of them as battle scars to brag about.

When the conditions get really bad, using a towel or shirt is a great way to keep

your camera dry so you can keep shooting a little longer. If you can predict the bad weather in advance, companies such as Think Tank Photo and AquaTech make really great rain covers that will have you shooting all day long in anything but a swimming pool. Having a good cover means you can still bring home the goods no matter how nasty the weather gets.

5. HEADLAMPS

It seems that most serious outdoor photo adventures either start before sunrise or end well after sunset. A good LED headlamp like those made by Black

Diamond for climbers and skiers will have a spotlight mode which works well finding the trail on those alpine starts, as well as a wider flood mode for in camp or working with your camera. If you plan to do any star photography spend the extra money to get a headlamp that also includes a red light. Red light allows you to shoot at night without losing your night vision. When choosing a light, get the brightest weather-sealed light you can find that still only takes AAA batteries. This allows it to still be small enough to fit inside a pocket or ride along in your camera pack without taking up much space. While LED lights seem to last forever, always make sure you have an extra set of batteries.

6. HAND WARMERS

Cold is your enemy and once your fingers get cold, it's all over. When the temperatures really drop, keep a set of disposable hand warmers in the palm of your gloved hands. This helps keep your fingers functional and allows you to wear lighter gloves that make controlling the camera easier. You can extend your shooting session by putting them in your boots under your toes as well. If it gets really cold, put one warmer with your extra battery inside an interior jacket pocket so you have a warm fresh battery to switch to when the one in your camera starts to die from the cold.

7. A SMARTPHONE

This seems almost a given these days but aside from the obvious music and possibility of calling for help if you break a leg, there are several smartphone apps that can increase your success rate in the backcountry. The first is The Photographer's Ephemeris, which is key to planning your next trip in knowing where the sun/moon will be rising or setting in any given location. The second is a good topographic GPS program that can be used when away from cell service. The ability to find my location on a digital topographic map has helped me reach several off-trail summits in the dark, and also helped me avoid at least two unplanned nights out with no sleeping gear (just remember to download the map before leaving cell service). ■

Josh Miller's images have been featured in publications throughout the world and his work is represented by Aurora Photos. To find out more about his work and his workshops, follow Miller on Facebook or Instagram @joshmillerphotography or visit his website at joshmillerphotography.com.

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ON THE EDGE

SCOTT SERFAS CAPTURES NAIL-BITING ACTION *By Jack Neubart*

SCOTT SERFAS IS ONE PHOTOGRAPHER who likes to get in on the action. In fact, he thrives on it. There is a certain amount of serendipity involved, but there is also a certain amount of passive control, in the sense that Serfas knows what to expect and expects the unexpected.

"I primarily photograph sports that I enjoy doing myself," Serfas observed. "I'm personally involved in snowboarding, skateboarding, surfing, and mountain biking. More recently, working with Red Bull I've been able to shoot sports that I don't do or no longer participate in, such as BMX (bicycle motocross), which I did as a kid."

But does Serfas consider this "extreme"? "I don't really call it 'extreme sports.' The word 'extreme' is used way too often. The guys that I'm shooting are on the top of the sport, and most of what they're doing is extreme. However, I prefer to call it 'action sports.'"

DOING WHAT HE LOVES

Capturing the action was a natural extension of being in the action for

Serfas. "I got started shooting friends on weekends," he recalled. "We'd go skiing or snowboarding, and we always had a camera with us so we could take pictures of each other. This was in the mid to late '80s. Snowboarding was still new and some areas forbade it at the time. As it grew, the guys I knew started getting sponsors and becoming professional snowboarders. They needed pictures, so I was the one who would take them. So as they were improving in their sport, I was improving with the camera."

Serfas started with his mom's Kodak Instamatic and moved up to his dad's fully manual Minolta SLR. "I was shooting negative color film. One of the sponsors wanted to buy a shot and said, 'If you had shot this on slide film, we could have used it and paid you \$100.' I said, 'You're

CLIENT: RED BULL

"We were promoting Brandon Semenuk's film *Rad Company*, which focuses on freeride mountain biking. Shooting hand-held, which is how I normally work, I found a vantage point that would reflect the bike in the water as it was sailing through the air and captured a rapid sequence that was stitched into the water below. I had to watch his body language to be prepared for the shot because I didn't know if or when he would actually hit the jump. It's all about timing for me and the rider." Technical info: Canon EOS-1D X, EF 24-70mm f/2.8L II; ISO 2500, f/5, 1/1000 second.

actually going to give me money for this, because I'm having a great time shooting it?" I was 18 or 19 at the time and getting paid for this was something I didn't know was possible. So I switched to slide film from that point forward, and was also forced to learn how to control the camera. After that, the work mushroomed with the increasing popularity of snowboarding as a sport."

TAKING A LEAP

If, for whatever reason, he didn't succeed as a professional photographer, Serfas had an exit strategy. Lucky for him, his leap of faith paid off.

"Right after high school I'd decided to become a plumber's apprentice, so I'd have a trade in case photography didn't work out. Fortunately, it did, because I wasn't

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Red Bull Joyride is the biggest slopestyle mountain-bike event of the year, which takes place at Crankworx Whistler Freeride Mountain Bike Festival. "You position yourself to shoot two or three different features, never knowing what will happen. In this instance, the rider missed a jump that he usually made, but he got back up and this time succeeded. I found the perfect spot, waited for the chairs, and grabbed the shot as he reached the apex of his jump between them." Technical info: Canon EOS-1D Mark IV, EF 70-200mm f/2.8L IS; ISO 800, f/8, 1/1000 second.



CLIENT: RED BULL

Travis Rice is featured here, for the snowboarding film, *The Art of Flight*. There were two helicopters, one for the film crew, the other carrying Serfas. "It was the last day available to me and the light was fading. It became a do-or-die situation. I shot this just as the film crew helicopter had completed a few turns around the mountain." The vignetting is natural to a point, but manually emphasized. Technical info: Canon EOS-1D X, EF 24-70mm f/2.8L II; ISO 1000, f/5.6, 1/1250 second.



PERSONAL

"The camera, in a housing, was half in the water and half out. I had wanted to do a shot like this for some years, and, as luck would have it, all the pieces came together at this location. The trout were added to the river and, of the numerous attempts at capturing the moment, this one shot also included a very cooperative trout staring into the camera." The park crew assisted with building a quarter pipe and a pond at the top, with the Fisheries Department supplying the trout. Serfas focused on the snowboarder. "I fired one light into the water, on the fish, and two or three lights on the snowboarder." Shot in Big Bear, California. Technical info: Canon EOS 5D Mark II, EF 15mm f/2.8 Fisheye; ISO 200, f/18, 1/250 second.

thrilled with plumbing. Whenever there was a lot of snow, I'd call in sick and head for Whistler Mountain to ride and shoot pictures.

"At one point, we'd hiked Mount Seymour and built snowboard jumps with Vancouver in the background. That sparked a growing interest in shooting there. It was then that I realized that I didn't need another job—this was paying the bills." That was in the early 1990s.

Working with the Minolta taught Serfas about timing: "You had to choose the right moment to shoot." After a few years and seeing what a friend's motor-driven camera could do, he switched to a Canon motor-driven SLR. He finally made the jump to digital—a Canon EOS-1D, in 2005, having been hesitant to take the plunge. He now primarily uses a 1D X, notably for its ability to capture rapid-action sequences. He processes the images in Lightroom.

"I'm about getting quality action. I want to make sure that the person in the shot is happy with it and I want to make sure that my photographs legitimize what that person is doing. And if I can add an artistic aspect or a creative angle, then that's great."



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PERSONAL

"What I like about this shot is that you have one wave coming in, the other going out, creating that funky lip. I'm on the back of a jet ski with the camera safely housed." This was shot in Mexico. Technical info: Canon EOS 5D Mark III, EF 70-200mm f/2.8L IS; ISO 200, f/5.6, 1/1000 second.



CLIENT: RED BULL

"This was for a project that we called 'Last Resort.' There was an abandoned, partially built resort hotel located on the east coast of Canada. With access to the property for a week, we built a ramp and positioned an HMI outside to simulate sunlight, aided by a smoke machine on the inside to help capture the rays of light. I had to wait for a video crew to finish shooting before I could capture this moment." Technical info: Canon EOS-1D X, EF 24-70mm f/2.8L II; ISO 2500, f/3.2, 1/250 second.

When it comes to exposure, "I determine how fast they're going to be moving." But it's not all available light. Far from it. Where needed, Serfas uses flash to make the athlete pop out of the scene. When time and location permit, he'll opt for a Profoto Pro-7b. In tight situations, the flash of choice is a Sunpak 555 handle mount, which has proved popular in skateboarding circles (he picks these up on eBay when they become available).

TOUGHING IT OUT

Serfas often works under Arctic-like conditions when shooting on a mountain or in freezing cold water in the ocean (despite wearing a wetsuit—even in summertime). In the water he'll employ an AquaTech housing (aquatech.net).

"Half the fun is avoiding injuries. Knowing the sport certainly helps. So does knowing what the athletes plan to do, and, if they make a mistake, knowing where they could end up, so you can prepare yourself to be clear of the action.

"In snowboarding, generally you're a little further away, but often you're

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HIS FAVORITE LENS

"I'd have to say the Canon 15mm fisheye is my favorite lens," Serfas said. "I hold the camera crooked when using that lens to help reduce the look of distortion. In a way, with this lens you become part of the shot, not a distant observer documenting a scene. It adds a lot more excitement to the shot."



CLIENT: RED BULL

"Drew Bezanson's idea was to do a freestanding wall ride on his BMX bike, jumping from these elevated cargo containers. He practiced the move first at ground level, and then took it to the extreme at this full height. I'm on a scissor lift about 65 feet up." Technical info: Canon EOS-1D X, EF 70-200mm f/2.8L IS; ISO 4000, f/4, 1/800 second.

working in avalanche conditions. If they land and the whole face of the mountain slides, is your bag zipped up and on your back, do you have your snowboard on and ready to move and find a safe spot? Lots of different things to consider in very little time."

Skateboarding has its own inherent risks. "A lot of times if I'm shooting skateboarding with a fisheye, I'll set up the camera angle, hold the camera in one hand, move my face away, and use my other hand



CLIENT: RED BULL

This is also from *The Art of Flight*, this time featuring snowboarder John Jackson. "I had no idea how big this jump would be because I only saw it from the top and couldn't see the crevice. I found an angle that kept me out of view of the aerial shots. He hit the jump four times and did a different trick every time. This is a backside 1080 double cork. I shot a fast sequence, which was later composited into a single frame to create a stroboscopic effect, thereby giving you a true feel for the jump." Technical info: Canon EOS-1D Mark IV, EF 70-200mm f/2.8L IS; ISO 400, f/5.6, 1/1000 second.

to block anything that comes at me."

As the popularity of a particular sport increases, so do the various locations that Serfas shoots in. "Now, it's more about getting to places where no one's been, getting to unique spots to shoot the action for myself and my clients." ■

Scott Serfas is based in Whistler, British Columbia, Canada. His action shots keep you on the edge of your seat. Go along for the ride by visiting scottserfas.com.

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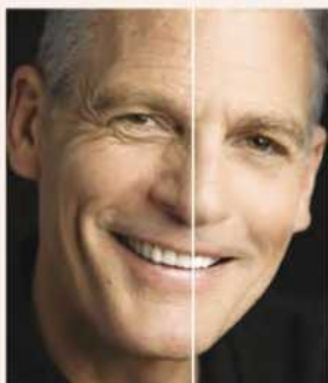
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FAST FRAMES

On a commercial shoot in Iceland, Lucas Gilman and his crew were up early to be ready for sunrise light. He shot this image with one of his go-to lenses, the 80-400mm, fitted with a 1.4x teleconverter.

ADVENTURE SHOOTER LUCAS GILMAN REVEALS THE TECH AND TECHNIQUES BEHIND HIS EXTREME OUTDOOR PHOTOGRAPHY *By Barry Tanenbaum*

WE WERE GOING OVER THE PHOTOS for this story when photographer Lucas Gilman said something I didn't entirely agree with. He was talking about making an image in which a bird came into the frame just as a surfer was making his move on a wave. "Cameras are so good now, anybody can take the exact same pictures I can," he said, "so what I do is look for and take advantage of subtleties that others overlook. That way I separate myself from everyone else who can buy a new camera and make great pictures."

I thought that his pictures were great for reasons other than subtleties. The capabilities of cameras, lenses, and lights are vital for capture, and subtleties add the equivalent of grace notes, but for me concept and realization made his adventure and lifestyle images stand out.

A few photos later I got to say so. "This photo—the surfer at the pier—what sets you apart here is the idea, and probably a lot of prep."

"Yeah, you're right," he said. "It took a couple of days to figure out where the light and the waves would be at that time of day, where to put the strobes, and then take the test shots."

That said, the gear's got to be as great as his determination, and his technique rock solid.

NEED FOR SPEED

Right off the bat you need fast glass and fast shutter speeds. For surfing, kayaking, skiing, and other peak-action moments, Gilman always tries to shoot 1/3000 second or faster with lenses f/2.8 or faster. "And having a 24mm f/1.4 for scenics is very helpful," he says, "because I'm out to freeze the person in the scene as well as every water droplet."

His list of must-have lenses starts with the 24-70mm f/2.8 for its versatility; he

estimates 80 percent of his images are made with it.

Second is the 80-400mm f/4.5-5.6. "It's a great combination of reach, especially with a 1.4 teleconverter, and relatively light weight, and it allows me to hand-hold for surfing shots." The third lens is the 24mm f/1.4. "Fast, sharp, and wide, and a lens for low light."

The camera these lenses are attached to might be a Nikon D4S or a D750, but is most likely a D810, which, when hand-holding isn't possible, will be attached to a Gitzo Traveler tripod. "It's very strong, and I'll weight it down with a camera bag or a mesh bag filled with rocks to stabilize it. Having that kind of stability to shoot those long exposures is paramount."

Speed also comes into play with his lighting gear, which he uses from time to time for surfing images. "I've put Profoto B1s on beaches and on piers, and will shoot high-speed sync at 1/3000 second or faster



Rafa Ortiz makes the first descent of the 128-foot Big Banana waterfall in Veracruz. "It's the second largest waterfall ever run," Gilman says. "I got two frames where he was visible before being engulfed in water. He comes out of a black canyon, out of darkness, so there's no warning. I had to pick him up as he emerged; if I'd blinked, I'd have missed him."

to freeze every water droplet and give the photo the drama and crisp sharpness that draws out the action. And I'll often use a Profoto TeleZoom Reflector to add to the reach of the strobes."

WORKING WITH ATHLETES

It helps if you've done the skiing, kayaking, climbing, and surfing. "The better you know the sport, the better you'll be able to photograph it," Gilman says. He allows that knowledge can come from studying the sport as well as participating, but in both cases you need to know what's perceived as good in that sport.

If you're a participant, chances are you've developed a network of athletes you can photograph. Or, Gilman says, "You can go to an REI, a climbing store, or a surf shop and ask around. 'Is there anybody really good who works here? Who you can connect me with? Someone who might be looking for pictures?' Once you've proven yourself with pictures, and have a portfolio, you're able to work with better and better athletes, and the better the athlete, the better the image."

There are two vital points to consider regarding athletes. One is respect and regard. Some actions are repeatable—a surfer is going to keep surfing, a skier pretty much the same—but some things you get only one shot at, like a kayaker running a big waterfall. "Typically they'll do it only once," Gilman says. "When they drop an 80-foot waterfall, it's like a front-



Gilman shot this in Cayucos, California, in the last light of day, standing on the beach at the back of the pier. "We essentially built a large studio outdoors, with Profoto B1 strobes on the pier to get the pop of the water. He's surfing within a certain zone; we light the area, and he performs in it."



"I shot this at the sand dunes near my home in California. Sand surfing is not really a sport, but it can be done. He's a pro surfer, and he landed it well; what you've got to watch out for is nosediving into the sand."

end collision with a small car. You can't be saying, 'Let's do another take.'"

Which is why Gilman often sets up remote cameras to maximize the return on one-shot runs. "I'll sometimes have three cameras set up, at different angles and set for horizontals and verticals. You never want the art director to say, 'We loved the take, but you didn't have a vertical so you didn't get the cover.'"

The second thing about working with athletes is that you can't lose a card, damage a drive, or not have more than one backup. "If you don't bring the shots home and deliver pictures to the athletes, they'll never work with you again."

So backup is serious business. "Every

day on a shoot we download everything to two hard drives," Gilman says, "and we keep the original cards, but we don't keep everything in the same place. The assistant might carry the hard drives, and I carry the SD and CF cards, and maybe one of the athletes will have a third piece of data. You don't leave all your data in the hotel room or in the car; I always want to have geographically separated backups." And even waterproof ones: "I've worked with G-Technology to develop a waterproof hard drive. I don't want to worry about a drive in a camera bag that gets splashed. You can't come back to a client and say your drives got wet and you lost some data. That can't happen."



IT'S ELEMENTARY

In adventure photography, there are things you can control: gear, itinerary, and to a certain extent, athletes. Then there's the big one you can't: the elements.

"It's vital to know what the weather will be," Gilman says, "so we can take advantage of what are often very small windows of light. We all carry smart devices and use everything from the Weather Underground app to area-specific local websites. We check forecasts, storm tracks, radar patterns, everything."

But you can't be too tightly controlled by forecasts. "I did a shoot with surfers in Iceland—it's one of the most magical places on the planet. We've had days when we got up at 3:30 in the morning—it's raining, but we went out. Then it gets colder and it's snowing. Then the wind's up and it's snowing sideways. But one time we had five minutes of light and got one

Gilman shot this with an 800mm lens, hand-held, from across the canyon. He had a remote camera set up to shoot a wider view at the same time. "This was in Iceland, and it was so cold he could do it only once. He was basically dropping into a vat of ice water."



In Vail, Colorado. "It was 14 below zero that morning, prime ice-climbing weather. What you're looking for in a shot like this is the moment when the climber is as stretched out as possible on a good spot so his effort will be obvious. I always try for the best foregrounds and backgrounds. In most of my photos they're as or more important than the action going on in the frame. Without an interesting canvas, the action doesn't work."

shot against a beautiful, glowing morning sunrise background before it went back to a whiteout. Now, the weather forecast had said snow, but we went out anyway.

"There are going to be days when it's likely you're going to get skunked, but you just have to put yourself out there." ■

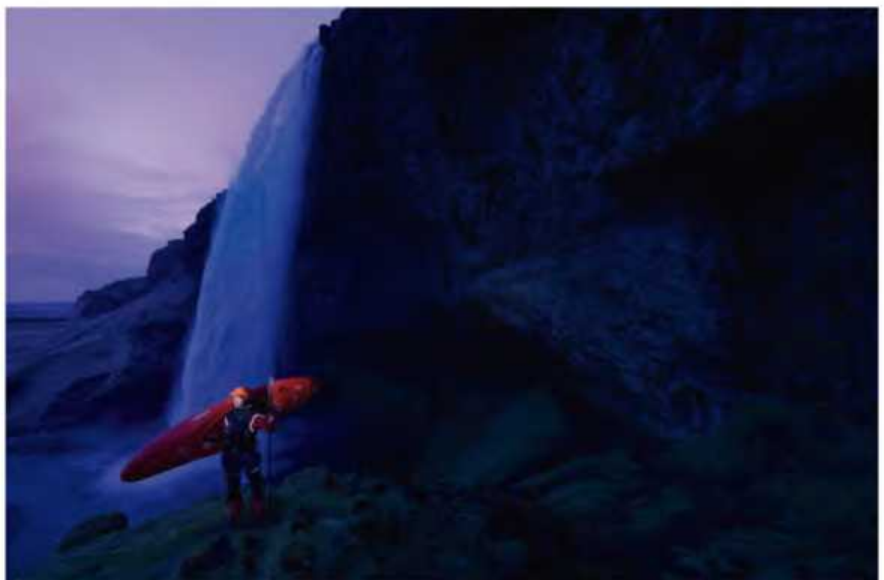
See more of Lucas Gilman's work on his website, lucasgilman.com. You can view his Instagram posts at [instagram.com/lucasgilman](https://www.instagram.com/lucasgilman).



Taken right after sunrise in Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve in Colorado, this is a photo inspired by the location. "I thought it would make a nice minimalist-type photo," Gilman says. "I wanted to make it as simple as possible, but dynamic at the same time."



Ice surfing in Iceland. "I'm always looking for dramatic foreground elements, and here it was a glacier lagoon in southern Iceland. The ice calves off a glacier and is washed up on the shore. With these great foreground elements to draw viewers in, I waited for him to do something dynamic."



"Shooting a portrait gives me a chance to connect with the athlete," Gilman says. The white balance set on tungsten turned the available light blue. An SB-910 Speedlight at camera left, zoomed to its maximum, had a full and a one-quarter CTO (Color Temperature Orange) gel on it. "It was a 1/40 second exposure. If you give a subject something to focus on or something to hold, he'll be more stable and still for longer exposures."



A colony of black-browed albatross near "The Neck" on Saunders Island.

EXTREME ISLAND HOPPING

TIPS FOR PHOTOGRAPHING THE FAR-FLUNG FALKLAND ISLANDS *By Chuck Graham*

IN TERMS OF EXTREME LOCATIONS, you can't pick a place much more remote than the Falkland Islands. Located 300 miles off the tip of Argentina in the South Atlantic Ocean, the Falkland Islands consists of two main isles—East and West Falkland Islands, plus 776 smaller islets, covering 4,700 square miles.

Less than 3,000 people live on the Falkland Islands, a British territory, with most living on East Falkland Island. Outlying farms and lodges are found on the outer islands, and wildlife abounds throughout. Land birds make up most of the Falklands avifauna with 63 species breeding on the islands, including 16 endemic species. The Falklands are home to five types of penguins, some of the largest albatross colonies on the planet, and healthy populations of southern elephant seals and South American fur seals.

What does this mean for the traveling wildlife photographer? Endless intimate and memorable encounters with some of the most approachable wildlife on the planet. The majority of the wildlife is accommodating and shows no fear, especially when approached slowly, low to the ground and sitting still. Don't be

surprised if the wildlife approaches you. I had a striated caracara inspecting my camera pack, its yellow talon latched onto the lid. I also had a curious gentoo penguin untie a shoelace while lying at the foot of a colony and I had two bull elephant seals make like sumo wrestlers where I hid behind a giant pile of kelp only 10 feet from me.

The following are the islands I chose for a two-week photo trip on the treeless, windswept Falkland Islands.

CARCASS ISLAND

Rob McGill's little seaside farm tucked away in a tranquil cove on Carcass Island is the ideal (and only) base on this windswept isle located in the northern portion of the chain. Magellanic penguins are the island wake-up call, braying from the mouth of their dens literally just outside the farmhouse door. Blackish oystercatchers



Falkland skua just before dive-bombing me.

nest in the spongy red crowberry (aka diddle-dee) and steamer ducks huddle in the gnarled mounds of kelp.

A single-track trail runs along the

shoreline through a village of tussock grass groves housing legions of Magellanic penguins. I also found an active striated caracara nest on a rocky outcrop offering a place for majestic portraits of this rare, predatory bird.

Nearby is a massive king cormorant colony on the edge of a sheer cliff overlooking the cobalt blue ocean. These awkward-looking birds with their serpentine-like necks are superior divers making deep descents for fish. Nesting closely together, there's lots of drama taking place here as the parents are very protective of their needy chicks.

SAUNDERS ISLAND

"The Neck," a narrow swath of sand, grit, and pebble between two steep hills, houses about 1,500 gentoo penguins spread out in 10 to 15 colonies. There is lots of drama to photograph here, too, across the exposed beach of "The Neck." It's best to stay low and belly crawl to the periphery of a colony and let the drama unfold before you. Photograph adorable chicks being fed by their mothers, chicks wandering away from their parents and getting flipper bashed by other impatient parents, and parents picking up cobble with their beaks to build a nest. Also interesting are predatory south polar skuas that are always on the lookout for an unbeknownst chick wandering away from the safety of its colony.

A steep off-trail hike behind the porta-cabin, which is the only place to stay at "The Neck," leads to large colonies of comical rockhopper penguins and majestic black-browed albatross. The rockhoppers are especially entertaining as they enjoy bodysurfing the frigid waves and bathing in shallow tide pools. They also sport the best hairdos on the entire chain. The black-browed albatross with their impressive 10-foot-wide wingspans nest in hardened mud bowls. What's amazing is they fit inside along with their fuzzy gray chicks. Regardless, they make fine subjects with equally inspiring backdrops.

The albatross also enjoy soaring in the perpetual sea breezes. Position yourself above the colonies and shoot down on their 10-foot-wingspans with ideal rugged backdrops.

SEA LION ISLAND

Photographic subjects abound across the entire isle located in the southern region of the chain. Breeding colonies consist of South American terns, raucous brown-headed and dolphin gulls, rockhoppers and gentoos, prehistoric-looking giant storm petrels, massive southern elephant



Shooting down on a soaring black-browed albatross.



Gentoo penguin chicks on Sea Lion Island.



Southern elephant seal exhaling from one nostril on Sea Lion Island.



Southern elephant seals battling on Sea Lion Island.



Portrait of a striated caracara on Carcass Island.



South American tern soaring above Sea Lion Island.

seals, and burly South American fur seals. Expect to also photograph black-throated finches, Falkland Island thrush, Cobb's wrens, two-banded plovers, and yellow-tailed teal.

Be prepared to walk long distances to the many wildlife locales. Sheer cliffs to sandy beaches surround Sea Lion Island. The entire island is relatively flat, so even though the walks are long the terrain is moderate.

VOLUNTEER POINT

The wayward point located on the eastern fringe of East Falkland Island is a must-photograph destination for four-foot-tall king penguins. Hundreds of them huddle together just off the beach socializing with their black-pointed beaks facing skyward.

Look for the males tending to their eggs, balancing them on top of their feet and warming them by tucking the eggs beneath their underbellies. Every now and then a brown chick would emerge showing itself amongst the towering kings.

The king penguins are very photogenic, their vibrant orange, yellow, and black coloring are a nice contrast against the chilly southern Atlantic and its gritty beaches.

ADDITIONAL TIPS

Be prepared for unpredictable weather. Make sure your camera pack has a built-in rainfly, and keep rain gear with you at all times.

Because the wildlife is tolerant of photography, a 300mm lens is plenty of focal length for most subjects. A circular polarizer is also handy while lighting fluctuates throughout the day. When the wind blows a strong, sturdy tripod is essential. A pair of binoculars is excellent for scanning the cliffs, bluffs, and sweeping beaches for wildlife. Dry bags that double as backpacks are also ideal for hauling gear. ■

For more information regarding the Falkland Islands, go to falklandislands.com.

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PHOTOGRAPHING NEW ORLEANS DURING MARDI GRAS

TIPS FOR CAPTURING THE BIGGEST PARTY IN THE WILDEST TOWN ON EARTH *By Ron Leach*

(Editor's Note: Destination Travel is a new Shutterbug column that offers tips on how to capture popular photo destinations. This month, Shutterbug publisher and New Orleans resident Ron Leach gets you ready for Mardi Gras in February 2016.)

IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR A DESTINATION offering unlimited photo opportunities, great history, amazing food, and a bit of debauchery, look no further than New Orleans during Mardi Gras.

While Mardi Gras festivities date back thousands of years to pagan celebrations of spring and fertility in Rome, New Orleans has been the epicenter of this raucous event since 1699 when French explorers held a small party just south of the current site after landing in what is now Louisiana. They named their spot Point du Mardi Gras, and the Carnival season has been going strong ever since. In fact, Louisiana is the only state in the U.S. in which Mardi Gras is a legal holiday.

The merrymaking season begins in January as a prelude to Lent and ends the day before Ash Wednesday—officially known as Mardi Gras (or Fat Tuesday), which falls on February 9th in 2016. Unless you can stay for a couple of weeks, the best time to visit is the extended weekend before Mardi Gras—February 5-9. That's when the most lavish parades roll, which include Bacchus, Zulu, Rex, and Endymion.

Some of the less famous parades are great too, and one of the best is hosted by The Mystic Krewe of Barkus where participants are dogs costumed in festive attire.

PICK YOUR SPOT

When photographing the parades you'll want to skip the insanity of the French Quarter and pick a spot in mid-city on St. Charles Ave., somewhere near Napoleon Ave. It's best to arrive early and set up camp along the curb so you have an unobstructed view of the floats. The parade schedule often changes due to weather (or just because it's New Orleans) but you can stay current by visiting nola.com and mardigrasneworleans.com where you'll find schedules, maps, and everything else you'll need.

Depending upon where you're staying, the best option for transportation is usually a taxi or streetcar because nearby parking is virtually impossible to find. And remember, the roads are blocked off to vehicles long before the parades begin to roll. A small backpack with snacks and beverages (and a rain jacket) is a good idea.



SHOOTING TIPS

The parades roll day and night, so be prepared to shoot under a variety of conditions. There are a lot of distracting background elements like street signs, telephone poles, electrical wires (and glaring streetlights at night), so I prefer to shoot with a wide-to-short telephoto zoom and get in tight on the floats and people I'm photographing. Something like a 24-105mm lens works great. Don't bother bringing a tripod to the parades; the quarters are so cramped you won't have room to set it up. However, a monopod is workable and extremely helpful for the nighttime events.

Your camera's follow focus mode is your best friend when shooting moving floats, marching bands, and the like, but here's a trick that frequently yields the best images: Floats stop frequently along



IF YOU GO

"Mardi Gras is the love of life. It is the harmonic convergence of our food, our music, our creativity, our eccentricity, our neighborhoods, and our joy of living. All at once."—Chris Rose, *1 Dead in Attic: Post-Katrina Stories*

Prime Dates: February 5-9

Hotels: Book as soon as possible since hotels in the Central Business District and the French Quarter fill up in early January. Search here: bestneworleanshotels.com.

Best Photo Times: Late afternoon and evening are the

best times to shoot parades. Early mornings are great for photographing architecture in the French Quarter and other scenic sites.

What to Wear: Layering is a must; temperatures in early February can vary between a balmy 70 degrees to the low 20s. Don't forget rain gear and comfortable shoes.

Photo Gear: DSLR or mirrorless camera with a 24-105mm lens or similar for the parades; an ultrawide or fisheye for cramped street scenes in the French Quarter; and a 200mm lens or similar for shooting

ships on the Mississippi River and boats on Lake Pontchartrain. Monopod, and something to keep your gear dry if it rains.

Photogenic Side Trips:

Oak Alley Plantation, Pearl River Swamp Tour (honeyislandswamp.com), Bayou Lafourche. More here: experienceneworleans.com/neworleansdaytrips.html.

Dining: A few personal favorites: Irene's Cuisine, Elizabeth's, Bacchanal, Parkway Bakery & Tavern, Mandina's, Melange, Jacques Imo's (pronounced Jockimo).

are clean and empty and you have all the wonderful French/Spanish architecture to yourself.

At some point during your visit you'll need to escape the madness and New Orleans is home to some very old and amazing above-ground cemeteries; one of the best to photograph is the Lafayette Cemetery on Washington Ave. next to the famous Commander's Palace restaurant. And a trip to New Orleans wouldn't be complete without a visit to St. Louis Cathedral at Jackson Square in the heart of the French Quarter.

I'd also recommend photographing the giant oak trees in City Park and taking a short ride out to Lake Pontchartrain at golden hour. And it should go without saying, but don't leave town without stopping at Café Du Monde for a latte and a beignet or three.

It's a great town, the people are very welcoming, and you only need to learn one French phrase before you arrive: "Laissez les bon temps rouler"—Let the good times roll! ■

the route to toss "throws" to the crowd (beads, medallions, stuffed animals, and other goodies), and that's when you should get busy. If you move quickly you can even step into the street and position yourself for the best lighting and composition before the floats resume rolling. Another useful technique is to kneel low to the ground and shoot up at the floats—thereby avoiding eye-level background clutter.

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

There are numerous opportunities for candid portraiture of people in interesting attire during the Mardi Gras festivities; street performers, musicians, mimes, and other entertainers abound on every corner. At some point you'll undoubtedly take a midnight stroll down Bourbon St., but my favorite time to shoot in the Quarter is in the early morning when the streets



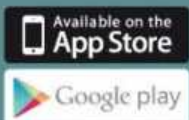
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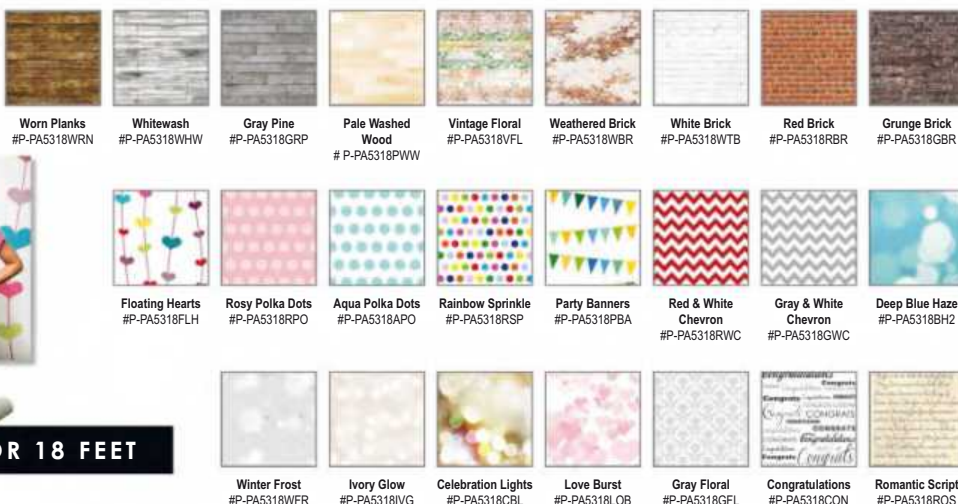


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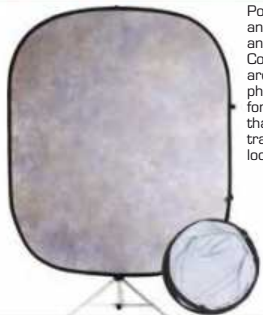
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Green 46PAS-12
Gray 12PAS-12
Blk/Wht 0120PAS-12
Blk/Wht/Grn 011220PAS-12
Blk/Wht/Grn 012046PAS-12



Vinyl Backgrounds | Starting at \$87



Savage Vinyl Backgrounds provide an ultra-smooth background and have a unique matte finish that eliminates glare. Vinyl stands up extremely well to wear, resists scuffs and is very easy to clean.

- Durable glare-free, matte finish material
- Moisture-resistant, easily cleaned finish
- Sturdy core prevents wrinkles and sagging

Pure White	Matte Black	Chroma Green	Pure White
5'x7' V01-0507	5'x7' V20-0507	5'x7' V46-0507	5'x7' V70-0507
8'x10' V01-0810	8'x10' V20-0810	8'x10' V46-0810	8'x10' V70-0810
8'x20' V01-0820	8'x20' V20-0820	8'x20' V46-0820	8'x20' V70-0820
9'x10' V01-0910	9'x10' V20-0910	9'x10' V46-0910	9'x10' V70-0910
9'x20' V01-0920	9'x20' V20-0920	9'x20' V46-0920	9'x20' V70-0920
10'x10' V01-1010	10'x10' V20-1010	10'x10' V46-1010	10'x10' V70-1010
10'x20' V01-1020	10'x20' V20-1020	10'x20' V46-1020	10'x20' V70-1020

Kits

All Vinyl kits include a 5' x 12' Background, and Port-a-Stand (10' 6" wide, 8' 10" high)

White 62037-0512
Black 62037-2012
Green 62037-4612
Gray 62037-7012



Green Screen Photo & Video Kits | Starting at \$65

Software Included!



Photo Creator Kit

- 5'x7' Muslin Green Screen
- 720 Digital Backgrounds
- Green Screen Wizard (PC/Mac)
- Removable hanging hooks

DBSK100



Digital Photography Kit

- 5'x6' Collapsible Green Screen
- 720 Digital Backgrounds
- Green Screen Wizard (PC/Mac)
- 8' Aluminum stand

DPK100



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- Sony Movie Studio Platinum 12 software (PC)

Small: VIDSMD Large: VIDSGL



Basic Video Kit

- 10'x12' Muslin Green Screen Background
- Sony Movie Studio Platinum 12 software (PC)

VID1012



Premium Video Kit

- 10'x12' Muslin Green Screen Background
- Sony Movie Studio Platinum 12 software (PC)
- Portable Background Stand

VID1024-PAS



Mat, Mount & Presentation Board



TruBlack Presentation Board

A neutral deep black is significantly "blackier" than standard presentation board. Other presentation board tends to have gray or blue tones. TruBlack is made with a solid black core middle and lined on both sides with deep black 4ply/40pt thickness.

8" x 10" 200 Qty #414001
11" x 14" 100 Qty #414002
16" x 20" 100 Qty #414004



Prestax® Mounting Board

Prestax® is a superior, pH neutral, pressure sensitive mounting board that requires no tissue, no heat and no special equipment, making it simple, fast, and economical to use. Peel back the release sheet, position the artwork or photo, and firmly press down, smoothing over the entire surface. 50pt thickness.

8" x 10" 200 Qty #30050
11" x 14" 100 Qty #30052
16" x 20" 100 Qty #30054



Mat Boards Black/White Cut Size

When you've created a truly amazing image that's worthy of hanging or selling, you'll want to make sure your presentation of the piece is both professional and archival. Savage Cut Size Mat Board is made from the finest cream core pulp and acid-free papers. 4ply/40pt thickness.

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11" x 14" 100 Qty #15402
16" x 20" 100 Qty #15404



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MISTY MOUNTAIN HOP

Shutterbug reader Susan Taylor captured this ethereal image of mist flowing down from the mountains at Yosemite National Park in California. "It's so exhilarating photographing Yosemite while a storm is clearing," Taylor says. "My handy weather app was spot on this time! Mist, fog, and weather was due to arrive in Yosemite Valley the next morning so I jumped in my camper with my two little dogs that night and rushed up there again. I was transcended by the incredible light, fall colors, and moody misty weather." She shot the image with a Canon EOS 5D Mark III DSLR and a Canon 24-70mm f/2.8 II lens on an Induro tripod with a Really Right Stuff head. It was processed from a single image using Lightroom 6. See more of Taylor's work at susantaylorphoto.com.

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